§ 29.—*Arrêté du Directoire Exécutif, concernant la délivrance des lettres de marque & autorisations pour armer en course dans les Colonies d'Amérique.*

Du 13 Thermidor, an VI.

LE DIRECTOIRE EXÉCUTIF, ouï le rapport du ministre de la marine & des colonies ;

Considérant que les nouvelles récemment parvenues des colonies Françaises & du continent Amérique, ne permettent pas de douter que des croiseurs Français, ou soi-disant Français, n'aient enfreint les lois de la République sur la course & les prises ;

Considérant que des étrangers & des pirates ont abusé de la latitude laissée à Cayenne & dans les Antilles aux armemens en course ou en guerre & marchandises, pour couvrir du pavillon Français leurs exactions & la violation du respect dû au droit des gens, ainsi qu'aux personnes & aux propriétés des alliés & des neutres,

ARRÊTE :

Art. 1er. A l'avenir, il ne pourra être délivré, dans les colonies d'Amérique, aucunes lettres de marque, autorisations ou permissions pour armer soit en course, soit en guerre & marchandises, que par les agens particuliers du Directoire eux-mêmes, lesquels ne pourront déléguer ce droit à personne, ne devront en user qu'en faveur

ARRÊTE ce qui ſuit :

Art. 1er. Les bâtimens uniquement chargés de marchandiſes Anglaiſes ſujettes à réexportation d'après les lois, ne pourront dans aucun cas être arrêtés par les corſaires, ſans que ceux-ci ſe rendent coupables d'attentats envers la ſûreté publique.

2. Pour conſtater l'identité de ces marchandiſes ſur les navires neutres, il ſuffira de dépoſer à bord,

1°. L'expédition du jugement de confiſcation ;

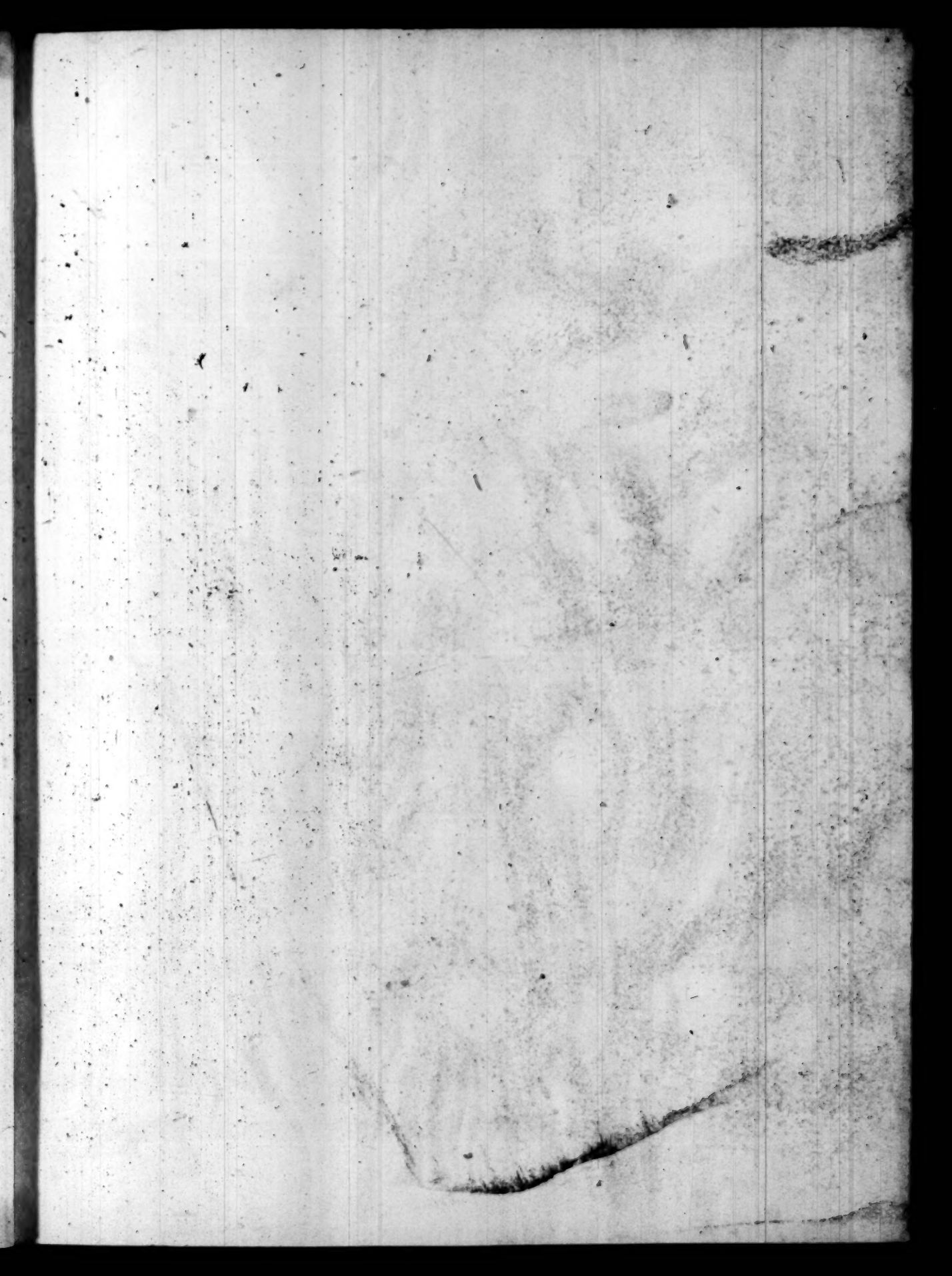
2°. Un inventaire détaillé des marchandiſes, valablement certifié par le prépoſé des douanes du port d'où le navire chargé de leur exportation mettra à la voile, lequel inventaire ſera également certifié par le contrôleur de la marine.

3. Il ſera de plus fait mention au bas dudit inventaire, du jour où le bâtiment qui en ſera porteur prendra la mer ; ce qui ſera certifié par le commandant de la rade, qui viſera auſſi la déclaration faite par le capitaine, du lieu de ſa deſtination, afin qu'il ne puiſſe, dans aucun cas, couvrir des expéditions frauduleuſes.

4. Les adminiſtrateurs de la marine & les prépoſés des douanes feront relâcher de ſuite les navires chargés de marchandiſes expédiées en conformité de l'article 2 ; & dans le cas où les tribunaux ſeraient déjà ſaiſis des conteſtations y relatives, ils donneront également main-levée deſdits navires & marchandiſes.

5. Le préſent arrêté ſera inſéré au bulletin des lois. Les miniſtres de la juſtice, des finances, & de la marine, ſont chargés de ſon exécution, en ce qui les concerne.

Pour expédition conforme, *ſigné* REUBELL, *Préſident* ; par le Directoire Exécutif, *le Secrétaire-général*, LAGARDE.



3165. c. 19.


RIC: SIBBS S: THEOL: D: AVL: KATHARINÆ CANTAB: MAG: NEC NON HOSPITIO GRAI: A S: CONCIONIBVS.
Ætat: suæ 58.

K Bible O.T. Hosea.

THE RETVRNING BACKSLIDER,

OR,

A COMMENTARIE

upon the whole xiiii. Chapter
of the Prophecy of the Prophet HOSEA.

Wherein is shewed the large extent of GODS free Mercy, even unto the most miserable forlorne and *wretched sinners that may be, upon their* Humiliation and Repentance.

Preached by that Learned and Judicious Divine, Dr. SIBBS, late Preacher to the Honourable Society of *Grayes Inne*, and Master of Katherine Hall in CAMBRIDGE.

Published by his owne Permission before his Death.

JEREM. 3. 10, 11.

Goe and Proclaime these words towards the North, and say, Returne thou Backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; *and I will not cause mine Anger to fall upon you: for I am mercifull, saith the* LORD. *and I will not keepe Anger for ever. Onely acknowledge thine Iniquity*, &c.

LONDON,
Printed by *G. M* for *George Edwards* in the Old Baily in Greene-Arbour at the signe of the Angell, MDCXXXIX.


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To the Reader.

GOod Reader this Treatile begs the favour of thoſe, concerning whom eſpecially it is ſaid Chriſt came for, poore trembling ſiners, the blind, the priſoners of hope, & ſuch who by the aſſiduity, iteration and multitude of Satans diſcouragements & temptations, ſit as it were in darknes, & in the valley of death, to whom every ſowre thing is ſweet. Becauſe theſe moſt of all reliſh and ſtand in need of mercy: for when

the leaſt flame of that unſup-portable wrath, breakes forth in ſhew, which is powred out like fire, and kindled by the breath of the Lord of Hoſtes like a ri-ver of brimſtone. which can make the mountaines quake, the hils melt, burne up the earth and all that is therein, the poore ſoule for the time thinking on nothing but blackeneſſe and darkeneſſe of tempeſt, whilſt by paſt ſinnes, without ſight of the Mediator ſtares them in the face with millions of uncon-ceiveable horrors and aſtoniſh-ments; then to ſee light in dark-neſſe, Mercy in wrath, the Sun-ſhine of righteouſneſſe, a grati-ous God appeaſed by a Media-tor, with ſome ſight and ſenſe of

its

its intereſt therin, this muſt needs overjoy the troubled ſoule: which is the maine ſubject of this booke: how gratious God is to encourage miſerable ſinners to returne: what incouragements and helps hee gives them: what effects his gratious working hath in them: and how ſweetly they cloſe with him againe. Wherefore though this meſſe comes not unto thee ſet forth in a Lordly diſh, not having paſſed ſince the preaching thereof, under the exquiſite hand of the moſt worthy Author, yet deſpiſe it not: for many times though things of greater judgement affect the underſtanding moſt, yet things of leſſer conciſeneſſe, worke

more upon the affections in a plaine flowing way: which happineſſe with all other felicities he wiſheth thee, who is ever

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THE RETVRNING BACKSLIDER.

SERMON. I.

HOS. 14. 1,2.

O Israel, Returne unto the Lord thy God: For thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity.
Take with you words, and turne to the Lord, ſay unto him, take away all iniquity, &c.

THE whole frame of *Godlineſſe* is a *Myſterie*, The Apoſtle calleth it, *a great Myſterie*, comprehending all under theſe particulars: God *was manifeſted in the fleſh, Iuſtified in the Spirit, Seene of Angels; Preached unto the Gentiles: Beleeved on in the world: received up into Glory.* 1 Tim. 3. 16.

SERM. I.

Amongſt which *Myſteries*, this may well be the *Myſterie* of *Myſteries*; God manifeſt *in the fleſh*: which includeth alſo another *Myſterie*; The *Gratiouſneſſe* and *abundant tender Mercy* of God towards miſerable wretched and ſinnefull Creatures, even in the heigth of their Rebellion; appointing ſuch a remedie to heale them: which is the ſubiect of this Chapter, and laſt part of this Propheeie: which, as it thunders out Terrible Iudgments againſt hard-hearted impenitent ſinners: (ſuch as were the moſt part of *Iſrael*) So is it mingled full of many and ſweet Conſolations to the faithfull in thoſe times, ſcattered amongſt the wicked troup of Idolaters then living.

The time when *Hoſea* propheeied was under the Reigne of *Vzziah*, *Iotham*, *Ahaz*, and *Hezekiah* Kings of Iudah: and in the daies of *Ieroboam*, the ſonne of *Ioaſh*, King of *Iſrael*: In whoſe daies Idolatry was firſt univerſally ſet up and countenanced by Regall power; This *Ieroboam* (*who cauſed Iſrael to ſinne*) that he might ſtrengthen himſelfe made uſe of Religion and profanely mixed it with his civill affaires in carnall pollicie, and ſo leavened the whole lump of *Iſrael* with Idolatry, that ſhortly after the whole Ten Tribes for their ſin, and their injuſtice, cruelty, luſt, ſecuritie, and ſuch other ſins as accompanied and ſprang from this bruiſh Idolatry, were led away captive by the King of *Aſſyria*, and the Lords Righteous judgment made manifeſt upon them.

There

There being notwithſtanding amongſt theſe ſome faithfull ones though thinly ſcattered, who mourned for, and by their good examples reproved theſe abhominable courſes. There being alſo a ſeed of the Elect unconverted, and of the converted ſome that were carried down to farr in the ſtrength of this ſtreame of wickedneſſe. In this Chapter therefore being the concluſion of this Propheſie there are many excellent and heavenly incouragements, alſo many earneſt incitements to repentance and returning to the Lord, with free and gratious promiſes not only of pardon and acceptance, but of great rewards in things ſpirituall and temporall to ſuch as ſhould thus returne.

O Iſrael, Returne unto the Lord *thy* God, *for, thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity.*

Take with you words, and turne to the Lord, *ſay unto him, Take away all iniquity*, &c.

In this Chapter,

1. We have an *Exhortation* to *Repentance*, with the *Motives* enforcing the ſame. [*O Iſrael, Returne unto the* Lord *thy* God] V. 1.
2. The *Forme* [*Take with you words, and ſay unto the* Lord, &c.] Ver. 2.
3. A *Reſtipulation*, what they ſhould Doe and returne backe againe, having their Prayers granted. 1. *Thankeſgiving* [*So will we render the Calves of our lips*] 2. *Sound Reformation* of their beloved Sin, [*Aſſur ſhall not ſave us*, &c.] with the *Reaſon* thereof, [*For in thee the Fatherleſſe findeth Mercy*,

Uerſe. 3.

4. *Gods Anſwer to their Petitions.* 1. In what Hee *will doe for them.* [*Heale their backſliding, Love them freely: and be as the Dew unto Iſrael*] with the *Reaſon* thereof, [*For mine Anger is turned away from him*] V. 4. 2. What hee will *Worke* in them: *A proportionable ſpeedie* growth in height, bredth and depth: [*He ſhall grow as the Lillie, and Caſt forth his rootes as Lebanon*, &c.] Which Mercy is further Amplified; *by a bleſſing powred out alſo* upon their *Families.* [*They that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall returne*] Verſe. 5. 6. 7.

5. There is ſet downe a further effect of this *Repentance*, and gratious worke in them: A ſound and ſtrong well rooted Indignation againſt their former darling ſinnes [*Ephraim ſhall ſay, what have I any more to doe with Idols?*] Backt with a *ſtrong Conſolation:* [*I have heard him, and obſerved him*, &c.] Verſe. 8.

6. The Divers Event and Iſſue of this Gods ſo Gratious Dealing is ſhewed: both in the *godly* and *Wicked.* 1. The *Wiſe* and *Prudent, underſtand and know, that the wayes of the Lord are right*, and ſhall *walke* in them. But 2. [*The Tranſgreſſors ſhall fall therein.*] Ver. 9.

O Iſrael, Returne unto the Lord thy God: for thou haſt fallen by thine Iniquity.

Every word hath his waight, and in a manner is

is an *Argument* to inforce this *Returning*.

O Iſrael!

Iſrael we know is a word of Covenant: *Iacob* was *Iſrael*, a *Prince* and *Wreſtler* with God, (as they alſo ought to be) Therefore he enforceth, you alſo ought to *Returne*, becauſe you are *Iſrael*. And 2. It was alſo an *Incouragement* for them to *Returne*, becauſe God ſo acknowledgeth them to be *Iſrael*: and will be Gratious unto them, though they were ſuch hideous ſiners.

Returne (ſaith Hee) *unto the Lord Iehovah*, Who is the chiefe good; for when a man returneth to the creature, which is a particular changable good unſatisfying the ſoule, he is reſtleſſe ſtill untill he come unto *Iehovah*, who is the all-ſufficient univerſall good, who fills and fills the ſoule abundantly: therefore, Returne to him who is *the fountaine of all good*, and giveth a Beeing unto all things: and not to *broken Ciſternes*. Hee is *Iehovah*, like himſelfe and *changeth not*. And then He is thy God. Therefore *Returne* to him who is thy God *in Covenant*, who will make good his gratious Covenant unto thee, and did chooſe thee to be *his people, before all the nations of the world*; this therefore is alſo an *Incouragement to Returne*. And then Ierem. 2. 13

Thou haſt fallen by thine Iniquity.

Therefore becauſe thou art fallen by thy Iniquities, and thine owne Inventions have brought theſe Miſeries upon thee, and none but God can helpe thee out of theſe Miſeries, ſeeing he only can, and is willing to forgive thy ſinnes, and

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revive thee: Therefore,

O Iſrael, Returne unto the Lord thy God: for thou haſt fallen by thine iniquity.

Now in that he forewarneth them of the fearefull Iudgements to come, which were to fall upon them, unleſſe they were prevented by true Repentance; hence in generall it is to be obſerved;

Obſer. That *God comes not as a ſuddaine ſtorme upon his people, but gives them warning before hee ſmites them.*

This is verified in Scripture: when the crie of *Sodome* and *Gomorrah* was great, *The Lord ſaid, Becauſe the Cry of Sodome and Gomorrah is great, and becauſe their ſinne is very grievous: I will goe downe now and ſee whether they have done altogether according to the crie of it which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.* And wherefore was the *Arke* of *Noah* ſo long in building, but to give warning to that finnefull age, which were nothing bettered by it. The like we have of *Pharaoh*, and all the *Egyptians* who had ſo many warnings and miracles ſhewed before their deſtruction came. Thus God dealt in *Amos: Therfore thus will I do unto thee; and becauſe I will doe this unto thee; Prepare to meet thy God O Iſraell. O Hieruſalem, Hieruſalem* (ſaith *Chriſt*) *thou that killeſt the Prophets, and ſtoneſt them which are ſent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together: even as a henne gathereth the chickens under her wings, and ye would not?* What need wee ſtand upon proofes? are not all

Gen. 18. 20. 21

Exod. 11. 1.

Amos, 4. 12.

Matth. 23. 37.

the

the Threatnings of Scripture, as so many warning peeces of approaching Iudgements.

The Reason hereof is, *His owne nature, hee is a God of long suffering*, he made the world in six dayes; yet hath continued it six thousand yeares, notwithstanding the many sinnes and provocations thereof, *His mercies being over all his works.* *Reason.* 1. Exod. 34 6. Psal. 145.9.

And partly, *from a speciall regard to his owne deare children*, these terrible thretnings not being killing and wounding, but like *Ionathans* warning Arrowes, who though he shot, yet ment no other harme to *David*, save to forewarne him of harme. 2. 1. Sam. 20.

Let us therefore observe Gods gratious and milde dealing in so much mercy, who giveth us so many warnings by his servants, & lesser judgments, which wee have had amongst us, Let us take notice and believe, so as belicfe may stirre up feare, and feare may provoke care, and care stirre up indeavours, to provide us an *Arke* even a hiding place beimes before winter and worse times come upon us. *Vse.*

Hence issueth another generall Point: That *The best provision for preventing of destruction is spirituall meanes.* *Observ.*

God himselfe is a Spirit, and spirituall means reach unto him, who is the first mover of the great wheele of all the affaires of this world: It is preposterous to beginne at the second cause, we trouble our selves in vaine there, when wee neglect the first. Wee should therefore begin the worke in Heaven, and first of all, Take up

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that quarrell which is betwixt God and our ſoules: If this be done firſt, we need not feare the carriage of ſecond things, all which God out of his good providence, and gratious care will frame to worke for good to his: for whoſe ſakes (rather then helpe ſhould faile) he will create new helpes. Wherefore in all things it is beſt to beginne with God.

Rom. 8. 28.

Iſa. 4. 5.

The third generall point, is this: That

Obſer.

Of all Spirituall meanes, The beſt is to returne to the Lord.

In Returning, 1 There muſt be a ſtop.

In this *Returning*, 1. *There muſt be a ſtop*: thoſe who have run on in evill waies, muſt firſt ſtop their lewd courſes, for naturally from our birth and childhood we are poſting on to Hell; and yet ſuch is our madneſſe, (unleſſe the Spirit of God ſhew us our ſelves) to be angry with theſe who ſtand in our way.

To make this *ſtop* then (which is alwayes before *Returning*) 1. There muſt be Examination and Conſideration whether our wayes tend: there be ſtopping Conſiderations, which both waken a man, and likewiſe put rubs in his way. If a man upon *Examination* find his waies diſpleaſing unto God, diſagreeing from the Rule, and *conſider* what will be the end and iſſue of them, (nothing but death and damnation) and withall *conſider* of the day of Iudgment, The houre of Death, The all-ſeeing eye of God and the like. So the Conſideration of a mans owne wayes, and of Gods wayes towards him, partly when God meetes him with goodneſſe:

I have hitherto beene a vile wretch; and God hath beene good to me, and ſpared me: and partly when God ſtops a wicked mans waies with thornes, meetes him with croſſes and afflictions, theſe will worke upon an ingenious ſpirit to make him have better thoughts and deeper conſiderations of true happineſſe and the way unto it. God puts into the heart of a man (whom he intends to ſave) ſerious and ſad conſiderations, what eſtate he is in, whither his courſe leads; and withall, hee lets them feele ſome diſpleaſure of his towards them in thoſe waies, by his wayes towards them. where upon they make a ſtop.

2. There muſt be *Humiliation, with diſpleaſure againſt our ſelves, judging and taking revenge of our ſelves, working* and *reflecting on our hearts,* taking ſhame to our ſelves, for our wayes and courſes. And withall, *there muſt concurre ſome hope of mercy*: for, ſo long as there is hue and crie (as we ſay) after a Traitor, he returnes not, but flyes ſtill and haſts away; but offer a pardon, and he Returneth. So, unleſſe there be hope of pardon to draw a man againe to God, as the *Prodigall* was moved to *Returne* by hope of *mercie* and favour from his father, wee will not, wee dare not elſe *Returne.*

2. *Humiliation.*

Luk. 15.

3. There muſt be a *Reſolution* to overcome impediments, for when a man thinks or reſolves to turne to God, Satan will ſtirre up all his inſtruments, and labour to kill Chriſt in his Infancie, and to quench good while it is in the purpoſe

3. *Reſolution.*

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poſe only the Dragon ſtood watching for the Birth of the Childe ſo doth Satan obſerve the birth of every good reſolution and purpoſe ſo farre as he can know them to deſtroy them.

Vſe. Let it be thought of by us in all our diſtreſſes, and in whatſoever other evidences of Gods anger, whether this meanes have bin taken up by us. It will be thus knowne.

1. Turning is a change of the poſture of the body, ſo is this of the frame of the mind, by this we know a man is in a ſtate of turning, the looke of his Intentions, Purpoſes, the whole bent of his ſoule is ſet another way, even upon God, and his word is the ſtarre of Direction towards which he bends all his thoughts.

2. *There is a Change of Actions.* 2. *His preſent actions alſo be contrary to his former:* there is not only a change of the diſpoſition of his ſoule: *Behold all things are become new.* Not ſome things but all, not only *new*, but with a *Behold new.* This change undoubtedly ſheweth that there is a true converſion and unfained.

2. Cor. 5. 17.

3. *By our aſſociation.* 3. By our aſſociation, he that turnes to God, turnes preſently *to the company of Gods people:* together with the change of his nature and courſe of life, there is a change of company, that is of ſuch as we make choice of for amity and friendſhip; other company by reaſon of our callings, and occaſionally may be frequented.

Iſa. 11.

4. It is a ſigne that one is not only *Turned*, but hath gon backwards from ſinne a great way, when the things of Heaven only are great things in his eyes, for, as the further a man goeth from

a

a place, the leſſer the things behind him ſeeme, ſo the greater the things before, he being neerer to them. The more ſublime and high thoughts a man hath of the wayes of God, and the meaner thoughts of the world and worldly matters hee eſteemed ſo highly of in the daies of his vanity: the more hee is *Turned* unto God.

This *Returning* is further inforced, ſaying, *Returne, unto the Lord thy God.*

It is very emphaticall and ſignificant in the Originall, returne [*uſquè ad Iehovam*] even to *Iehovah*, as though he ſhould ſay, do not only beginne to *Returne* towards *Iehovah*: but ſo *Returne, as you never ceaſe comming till you come to Iehovah.*

Even unto the Lord thy God.

Obſer. *It is not enough to make a ſtop and to forbeare the practiſing of our former ſinnes: but wee muſt come home, even unto the Lord our God, to be pardoned, and healed of him.*

The *Prodigall ſonne*, had beene never a whit the better, to ſee his ſinne and miſery, and to be grieved for his wicked life paſt, unleſſe hee had come unto his father for *Pardon* and *Comfort*. And when thoſe were pricked in their hearts at *Peters* Sermon, asking *Peter* what they ſhould do? hee exhorted them, *To Repent, every one to be Baptiſed in the name of Ieſus Chriſt, for the Remiſſion of ſins: and ſo they ſhould receive the Holy Ghoſt.* And when Chriſt invites all thoſe *who are wearie and heavie laden to come unto him*; he bids them not now be further humbled and

Luk. 15.

Act. 2. 38.

Matt. 11. 28.

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and grieved for their ſinnes: but by Faith to come unto him to be healed, and ſo they ſhould find reſt and peace to their ſoules. It is not ſufficient for a wounded man to be ſorry for his brawling and fighting, and to ſay he will fight no more: but he muſt come to the Surgeon to have his wounds ſtopt, dreſſed and healed, or elſe it may coſt him his life: So it is not enough to be humbled and grieved for ſinne; and to reſolve againſt it: we ſhall relapſe againe do what we can, unleſſe wee come under the wing of Chriſt to be healed by his blood.

Vſe. Many think they have repented and are deceived upon this falſe ground: they are and have bin grieved for their ſins and offences, are determined to leave and forſake them, and that is all they do, they never lay hold on Chriſt and come home to God.

For thou haſt fallen by thine Iniquitie.

Here divers points might be inſiſted on. 1. that

Obſer. *Where there is a falling into ſinne, there will be a falling into miſerie and judgement.*

This is made good in the experience of all times, ages, perſons, and ſtates, ſtill the more ſinnfull any were, the more fearefull judgements felt upon them: and as ſoone as any man came into a ſinfull ſtate, he entered into a declining ſtate, as *Iacob* ſaid of his ſonne *Reuben* who had defiled his bed: unſtable as water, *Thou ſhalt not excell; becauſe thou wenteſt up to thy fathers bed.* So ſinne ſtill debaſeth a man: ſo much ſinne ſo much loſſe of excellencie.

Geneſ. 49. 4.

The

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The Uſe hereof is firſt againſt thoſe, that complaine of their troubles and miſeries, as though God and men had dealt hardly with them, whereas their owne waies indeed have brought al theſe evills upon them, God is a ſufficient wiſe and holy diſpoſer and orderer of all the wayes of men; and rewarder of good and evill doings; God being wiſe and juſt in his diſpoſing of all things, it muſt needs follow, that it ſhall goe well with thoſe that are good; as the Prophet ſpeakes; *Say unto the juſt, that it ſhall be well with them; for the reward of their workes ſhall be given them.* And if it fall out otherwaies then well with men, the blame muſt be laid on their owne ſinne. As the Church confeſſeth, and therefore reſolveth: *I will beare the indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him; untill hee plead my cauſe, and execute judgement for mee: hee will bring mee forth in the light; and I ſhall ſee his Righteouſneſſe.* If *Adam* ſinne hee ſhall find a Hell in a Paradice, if *Paul* returne and returne to God hee ſhall finde a Heaven in a Dungeon.

Vſe. 1.

Lam. 3. 39.

Micah. 7. 9.

It ſhould move us therefore to ſeeke unto God by unfained Repentance to have our ſinnes taken away and pardoned, or elſe, howſoever wee may change our plagues; yet they ſhall not bee taken away, nay wee ſhall ſtill (like *Pharoah*) change for the worſt, who though hee had his judgements changed: yet ſinne the cauſe remaining, hee was never a whit the better, but the worſe for changing, untill his finall

Vſe. 2.

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finall ruine came.

Rom. 6. 23. *The wages of ſinne is Death,* Sinne will crie till it hath its wages. *Where Iniquitie is, there cannot but be falling into judgement.* Therefore they are cruell to their owne ſoules, that walke in evill wayes, for undoubtedly God will turne their owne waies upon their owne heads. Wee ſhould not therefore envie any man (be hee what hee will) who goeth on in ill courſes, ſeeing ſome judgement is owning him firſt or laſt, unleſſe he ſtop the current of Gods wrath by Repentance. God in much mercie hath ſet up a Court in our hearts to this end, that if wee judge our ſelves in this Inferiour Court, wee may eſcape, and not be brought up into the higher: if firſt they be judged rightly in the Inferiour Court, then there needs no review. But otherwiſe, if wee by Repentance take not up the matter, ſinne muſt be judged ſome where, either in the Tribunall of the heart and conſcience, or elſe afterwards there muſt be a reckoning for it.

Vſe. 3. Thirdly, hence wee learne, ſince the cauſe of every mans miſerie is his owne ſinne; *that therefore all the power of the world, and of Hell, cannot keepe a man in miſerie, nor hinder him from comfort and happineſſe, if hee will part with his ſinnes by true and unfained Repentance;* as we know

2 Chro. 33. 12, 13. *Manaſſes*, as ſoone as he put away ſin the Lord had mercie upon him, and turned his captivity. So the people of Iſraell in the *Iudges*, looke how often they were humbled and returned to God,

ſtill

ſtill he forgave them all their ſins, as ſoone as they put away ſinne, God and they met againe. So that, if we come to Chriſt by true Repentance, neither ſinne nor puniſhment can cleave to us. Pſal. 106.43, 44. Pſal. 107.19.

Thou haſt fallen, &c.

Fallen blindly as it were, thou couldeſt not ſee which way thou wenteſt or to what end thy courſes did tend, therefore thou art come into miſery, before thou knoweſt where thou art. A ſinner is blind, the god of this world hath put out his eyes, they ſee not their way nor foreſee their ſucceſſe. The Divell is ever for our falling, that we fall into ſinne, and then fall into miſery, and ſo fall into deſpaire, and into hell, this pleaſeth him. *Caſt thy ſelfe downe*, ſaith he to Chriſt, downe with it, downe with it ſaith *Edom*. Hell is beneath, the Divell drives all that way. 1 Cor. 4.

Take heed of ſinne, take heede of blindneſſe, ponder the path of your feet, keepe your thoughts heaven-ward, ſtop the beginnings, the firſt ſtumblings, pray to God to make our way plaine before us, and not to lead us into temptation. *Vſe.*

Verſe 2. *Take with you words, and turne to the Lord, ſay unto him, &c.*

Theſe *Iſraelites* were but a rude people, and had not ſo good meanes to thrive in grace, as *Iudah* had: Therefore, hee prompts them here with ſuch words as they might uſe to God in their

their *returning*. [*Take with you words*,] whereby we ſee how gratious God is unto us, in uſing ſuch helps for our recovery, and pittying us more then we pitty our ſelves. Is not this a ſufficient warrant and invitation to *returne*, when the party offended who is the ſuperiour, deſires, intreates, and ſues unto the offending, guilty inferiour, to be reconciled.

2 Cor. 5.

God is willing to be at peace with us.

But this is not all, he further ſheweth his willingneſſe in teaching us who are ignorant of the way; in what manner and with what expreſſions we ſhould returne to the Lord. He giveth us not onely words and tells us what we ſhall ſay, but alſo giveth his Spirit ſo effectually therwith, as that they ſhall not be liveleſſe and dead wordes, but (as *Rom*, 8.26.) with unexpreſſible ſighes and groanes unto God; who heareth the requeſts of his owne Spirit. Chriſt likewiſe teacheth us how to pray, wee have words dictated, and a ſpirit of Prayer powred upon us. As if a great Perſon ſhould dictate and frame a Petition for one who were affraid to ſpeake unto him. Such is Gods gratiouſneſſe, and ſo ready is he in Jeſus Chriſt to receive ſinners unto mercy.

Take unto you wordes. None were to appeare empty before the Lord at *Jeruſalem*, but were to bring ſomething. So it is with us, we muſt not appeare empty before our God, If we can bring nothing elſe, let us bring *wordes*, yea though broken wordes, yet if out of a broken and contrite heart it will be a ſacrifice acceptable.

This

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This ſame taking of words or petitions in all our troubles and afflictions muſt needs be a ſpeciall remedie, it being of Gods owne preſcription, who is ſo infinite in knowledge and skill: whence wee obſerve, That

Obſerv. *They who would have helpe and comfort againſt all ſinnes and ſorrowes, muſt come to God with words of Prayer.*

As wee ſee in *Ionahs* caſe in a matchleſſe diſtreſſe, words were inforcive and did him more good then all the world beſides could: for after that hee had bin humbled and praied out of the whales belly; the whale was forced to caſt him out againe. So the *Prodigall ſonne* beeing undone, having neither credit, nor coyne, but all in a manner againſt him; yet hee had *words* left him. *Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven and before thee: and am no more worthy to bee called thy ſonne, make mee as one of thy hired ſervants.* After which his father had compaſſion on him. And good *Hezekiah*, being deſperately ſicke, of a deſperate diſeaſe, yet when hee ſet his faith a worke, and tooke with him *words* (which comfort onely now was left unto him) wee know how after hee had turned his face towards the wall and prayed with *words*. God not only healed him of that dangerous diſeaſe, but alſo wrought a great miracle for his ſake, cauſing the *Sunne* to come backe *ten degrees*. Thus when life ſeemed impoſſible: yet words, prayers, and teares prevailed with God. *Iehoſhaphat* alſo, going to

Luke 15.18.

Iſa. 38.2.

warre with *Ahab*, againſt Gods commandement, and in the battell being encompaſſed with enemies: yet had *words* with him readie and after prayer found deliverance. *Eliah*, likewiſe after a great drowth and famine, when raine had bin three yeares wanting: and all in a manner out of frame for a long time: *Tooke with him words*: and God ſent raine aboundantly upon the earth againe.

1 Chron. 18. 31

James 5.

The Reaſon is, becauſe Prayer ſets God on worke, and God who is able and willing to go through with his works, ſets all the creatures on worke. As we heard of *Eliah*, when hee prayed for raine, the creatures were ſet a worke to effect it. Where it may be Objected, O but raine might come to late in that hot Countrie, where all the Rootes and Herbes might bee withered and dried up in three yeares ſpace. Yet all was well againe, the land brought forth her increaſe as formerly; for faithfull Prayer never comes too late; becauſe God can never come too late, if our prayers come to him, we ſhall find him come to us. *Iehoſhaphat* we read was in great diſtreſſe when three Kings came againſt him, yet when hee went to God by unfained and hearty faſting and prayer, God heard him, fought for him, and deſtroyed all his enemies. The Scripture ſheweth alſo how after *Hezekiahs* Prayer, againſt *Senacheribs* Blaſphemies and threatnings: the Lord ſent forth his Angell and deſtroyed in one night of them, a hundred foureſcore and five thouſand of

Hoſ. 2. 21, 22.

1 King. 18. 45.

Object.

Anſw.

2 Chron. 15. 2

2 Chron. 19. 6 14.

2 King. 19. 20. 35.

of the *Aſſyrians*.

This is firſt *for Reproofe of thoſe* who in their diſtreſſes ſet their wit, wealth, friends, and all a worke, but never ſet God a worke, as *Hezekiah* did in *Senacheribs* caſe. The firſt time hee turned him off to his coſt with enduring a heavie taxation, and yet was never a whit the better for it; for *Senacherib* came ſhortly after and beſieged *Hieruſalem*, untill *Hezekiah* had humbled himſelfe and prayed: and then God chaſed all away and deſtroied them; he had better have done ſo at firſt, and ſo have ſaved his monie and paines too. The like weakeneſſe we have a proofe of in *Aſa*: who when a greater Armie came againſt him of ten hundred thouſand men, laid about him, *Prayed* and *Truſted* in God: and ſo was delivered, with the deſtruction of his enemies, yet in a leſſer danger, againſt *Baaſha* King of *Iſrael*, diſtruſted God; and ſent out the Treaſures of the houſe of God, and out of his owne houſe unto *Benhadad* King of *Syria*: to have helpe of him, by a diverting warre, againſt *Baaſha* King of *Iſrael*, which his plot though it proſpered, yet was hee reproved by the Prophet *Hanani*, and warres thenceforth denounced againſt him. This *Aſa* notwithſtanding this experiment afterwards ſought unto the Phiſitian, before hee ſought unto God.

Vſe. 1.

2 King. 18. 14.

2 Chron. 14. 11

2 Chron. 16. 2.

2 Chron. 16. 7.

Secondly, *This blameth that barrenneſſe and want of words to go unto God*, which for want of

Vſe. 2.

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hearts wee often find in our ſelves. It were a ſtrange thing to ſee a wife have have words enough for her maids and ſervants: and yet not to bee able to ſpeake to her husband. Wee all profeſſe to bee the Spouſe of Chriſt, what a ſtrange thing then is it, to bee full when wee ſpeake to men, yet be ſo emptie and want words to ſpeake to him. A begger wee know wants no words, nay, he aboundeth with variety of expreſſions, and what makes him thus fruitfull in words: his neceſſity and in part his hope of obtaining.

What makes a bold begger.

These two make beggers ſo earneſt. So would it be with us, if we found ſufficiently our great *need* of Chriſt; and therewith had *hope*, it would embolden us ſo to go to God in Chriſt, that we ſhould not want words: but wee want this *hope* and the feeling of our neceſſities, which makes us ſo barren in prayer.

Prepare thy ſelfe therfore to prayer by getting unto thee *a true ſenſe of thy need: acquaintance with God, and hope to obtaine*, and it will make thee fervent in prayer, and copious in thy requeſts.

Vſe. 3. Thirdly, this is *for Conſolation*, though one ſhould want all other meanes, yet whatſoever their miſery be, if they can *take words*, and can pray well, they ſhall ſpeed well. If the miſery be for ſin, confeſſe it, and ask pardon for it, and they ſhall have it, *and be cleanſed from all unrighteouſneſſe*. Words fetch the comfort to us, though it be the *blood of Chriſt onely that hath paid the debt*.

Iſa. 38. 3.

1 John 1. 9.

Iſa. 53. 5.

The end of the firſt Sermon.

THE SECOND SERMON.

Hos. 14. 2.

Take with you words, and turne to the Lord, ſay unto him take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly, ſo will we render the Calves of our lips.

AS wee loſt our ſelves in the firſt *Adam*; ſo the mercie of God in the Covenant of Grace found out a way to reſtore us againe by the ſecond *Adam*, Jeſus Chriſt, in whom all the Promiſes *are yea and Amen, yeſterday and to day, and the*

ſame for ever. And as the wiſedome of God did freely find out this way at firſt comforting our firſt Parents with it in *Paradice*: ſo this bowells of incomprehenſible love of his, hath ſo gon on from time in all ages of the Church, comforting and raiſing up the dejected ſpirits of his Church from time to time, and awakening them out of their drowſineſſe and ſleepie condition. And many times the greater ſinners he dealt with, the greater mercies and tender bowells of compaſſion were opened unto them, in many ſweet and gratious promiſes tendering forgiveneſſe, and inviting to Repentance, as here in this Chapter and whole Prophecie is ſhewed: what Tribe ſo wicked, ſo full of Idolatry and Rebellion as *Ephraim*, and yet here *Ephraim* and *Iſrael* are taught a leſſon of Repentance: as the tender Nurſe feeds her childe and puts meate in its mouth, ſo here the Lord puts words in the mouth of this Rebellious people.

Take with you words and turne unto the Lord.

Object. What needs God words, hee knowes our hearts before we ſpeake unto him?

Anſw. Its true, God needs no words, but we doe, to ſtirre up our hearts and affections: and becauſe he will have us take ſhame unto our ſelves; having given us our tongues as an inſtrument of glorifying him, he will have our glory uſed in our Petitions and Thankesgivings: and therefore, in regard of our ſelves, he will (as was ſaid) have us take words unto our ſelves; for exciting of the graces of God in us by words, blowing up

Why wee muſt bring words with us though God knowes our minde.

up of the affections, and for manifeſtation of the hidden man of the heart: God will be glorified by the outward as well as by the inward man.

And Turne to the Lord.

He repeats the exhortation of Returning, to ſhew, that *words muſt not bee empty, but ſuch as are joyned with a purpoſe of turning to God:* for otherwiſe to turne to him with a purpoſe to live in any ſin, is the extremity of prophane impudence; to come to aske a pardon of the King, with a reſolution to live ſtill in Rebellion againſt him, what is this but mockerie, as if one ſhould come with a dagg to ſhoote him. Such is our caſe, when we come to aske forgiveneſſe with a purpoſe to offend. It is the extremity of prophaneneſſe to come to aske a pardon, to the intent that we may ſin ſtill: therfore he repeates it againe; *Take unto you words, and turne to the Lord.* The *Forme* is,

That words and purpoſes muſt concurre in Prayer.

Take away all iniquity, and receiue us graciouſly; or (Doe good to us) *So will we render the Calves of our lips.* Wherein we have

1. A *Petition* { 1. *To take away all iniquity.* 2. *To receive them gratiouſly.*

2. A *Reſtipulation*, or promiſe of thankfullneſſe backe againe to the Lord: *So will we render the Calves of our lips.* So that we may obſerve hence

What God will grant us, he will have us aske of him: yet for all theſe things I will be ſought unto of the Houſe of Iſrael; ſaith God: becauſe hee will have us acknowledge our homage and dependance

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dance upon him: therefore we muſt aske what he hath purpoſed to give. *Take away all iniquity*, &c. where there is an implication of a confeſſion of their ſins and great iniquities: *Take away iniquity*; and *Take away all iniquity*: that is, our manifold guilt. So *before Petition there muſt be a free and full Confeſſion*, as was ſhewed before.

Of Confeſſion, how it is to be done, and unto whom.

Now this Confeſſion here, is made to God, and to God onely (ſaith *Auſtin* in this caſe) Becauſe it is a point in controverſie, it is good to heare what the Ancients ſay. There are a curious ſort of men, who are buſie to ſearch into other mens lives, and are careleſſe in amending their own. Saith he, *what have I to do with men to heare me confeſſe when I have offended God: wee muſt confeſſe to God, and to God only*. But in ſome caſes there may be publique and private Confeſſion to men. Publique in publique offences for the ſatisfaction of the Church and the glory of God, for preventing of ſcandall. Private to Miniſters for the quieting of conſcience: but this is onely in ſome caſes; men goe not to the Chirurgeon (as the Papiſts would have it) for every little prick of their finger. No, but yet in ſome caſes it is good to open the matter to a Miniſter who hath the tongue of the learned: but the ſin is toward God, againſt him; hee onely being able to forgive ſins, as the *Phariſees* confeſſed, *None can forgive ſinnes but God*; the Papiſts therefore herein are worſe then the Phariſees.

Auguſtin.

Simile.

Mark. 2. 7.

The

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The *Petition* is, *Take away iniquity*, and *all iniquity*. Why *all?* becauſe where there is any true goodneſſe in the heart, that hatred which carries the bent of the ſoule againſt one ſinne, is alike againſt all (as I ſhewed) and the divell carries thouſands to hell by this partiall obedience; becauſe he knowes at any time where to have ſuch. God and a purpoſe to ſin will not ſtand together, nor dwell in a heart that allowes it ſelfe in any ſin, be it never ſo ſmall. He ſaith, *Take away all*, becauſe the Spirit of God workes in a man renewed ſuch a diſpoſition of ſincerity to hate all alike.

Why all iniquity is prayed againſt.

1. *In a ſincere ſoule all are alike hated.*

Secondly, he ſaith, *Take away all iniquity*, becauſe the heart which deſires to bee at peace with God, deſires alſo to bee like God, who hates all ſinne: therefore (ſaith the ſanctified ſoule) forgive all ſin, Take all away, that I may have nothing in me diſpleaſing unto thee: I deſire to joyne with the Lord, to hate what he hateth, and as he hateth, to carrie a perfect hatred to the whole kinde. *Take away all iniquity*, hatred is not ſatisfied, but with the utter aboliſhing of the thing hated. Therefore it hath this extent here, *Take away all* ſin; both the guilt and the reigne of every ſin, that none may rule in me, nay, by little and little purge out all: *Take away iniquity*, and the traine of all which it drawes after it, *Judgements*. *Take away inquity*; that is, forgive the ſin, and overcome the power of it by ſanctifying grace, and remit the judgements attending it.

2. *Becauſe a renewed ſoule deſires to bee like God.*

Take

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Sinne hateſull to a conſcience awaked.

Take it away.

That is, take away the guilt of it utterly by pardon, and the remainders thereof by ſanctifying grace, ſo as the Spirit may rule and be all in all in us. They ſee ſinne is an offenſive thing, and therefore they ſay, *Take it away*, as an offenſive odious thing, and as a burden. For howſoever it be ſweet as honey in the committing it, afterwards when the conſcience is throughly awaked, it is moſt offenſive and bitter; ſo as in this caſe, a ſinner would gladly run from his owne conſcience, and from himſelfe, run any where from the tormenting and racking thoughts of conſcience awaked: and withall hates the place where it was committed, and the company with whom, yea the thoughts of them, as *Abſolom* hated *Thamar* after hee had lyen with her, ſo a ſinner awaked from ſin, hates what hee formerly loved. As good men love the circumſtances of any thing which puts them in mind of any good they have done, loving both place and perſon. So it is with a ſinner when his conſcience is awaked, hee hates all things which puts him in minde of his ſins, therfore, *Take it away*, forgive it, caſt it into the bottome of the Sea, blot it out of thy remembrance, cover it, impute it not, all which phraſes ſhew a taking away.

Triall of a ſound deſire of forgiveneſſe.

Therefore, I beſeech you, let us examine our ſelves hereby, whether our deſire of forgivenes be ſound or not, if we deſire ſin ſhould be taken away, we cannot thinke of it with comfort. For

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in that many thinke with delight of their old ſins, what doe they elſe, but repeate them over againe and againe? but where the heart is ſoundly touched with a ſaving ſenſe of ſinne; O then he cries, Take it away, Take it out of my conſcience that it cauſe not deſpaire there, and out of thy remembrance, that no advantage be taken againſt me for it. *Take it away.* But it is no otherwiſe taken away then by ſatisfying of divine juſtice. How much are we beholding to Chriſt therefore, who hath borne and taken away our ſins, (and as the Scape-goate) gon away with the burden of all into the wilderneſſe of oblivion. Bleſſed be God, and the Lamb of God that takes away the ſinnes of the world. We can never bleſſe God too much nor ſufficiently for Chriſt. *Bleſſed be God the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.* Now we may thinke of ſinne without ſhame and deſpaire: O bleſſed ſtate, when a man can thinke of his former odious and filthy loathſome ſinnes, and yet not deſpaire: Becauſe when he beleeves in Chriſt, the blood of Chriſt purgeth all away, takes away all ſin. He hath taken them away.

That a true Convert firſt begs mercy above all.

You ſee here in the firſt place, they pray for the taking away of their iniquity, for take away this, and all other mercies follow after: becauſe this onely is it which ſtops the current of Gods favours, which remooved, the current of his mercies run amaine. As when the clouds are gone, the Sun ſhines out: So let our ſinnes bee remooved, and Gods favour immediately ſhines

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ſhines upon us. Therefore firſt, *Take away all iniquity*; and then we ſhall ſee nothing but thy Fatherly face in Chriſt. You ſee what the care of Gods children is to ſeeke mercy and favour in the firſt place: as *David*, *Pſal.* 51.1. *Have mercy on me, O Lord:* this he begs firſt of all, whereas God had threatned other terrible judgements, as that the ſword ſhould never depart from his houſe, *&c.* yet he neglects all (as it were) and begs onely for mercy, *to take away iniquity*. For, a ſinner is never in ſuch a bleſſed condition as he ſhould be in, untill he prize and deſire mercy above all; becauſe though we be in miſery, untill then (with ſinfull *Ephraim*) *Hoſ.* 7.14. wee howle upon our beds for corne and wine, preferring earthly ſenſuall things before all. But that ſoule and conſcience which is acquainted with God and the odiouſneſſe of ſin, that ſoule God intends to ſpeake peace unto in the end, deſires pardon of ſinne and mercy above all, for it knowes that God is goodneſſe it ſelfe, and that when the interpoſing clouds are vaniſhed, God cannot ſhew himſelfe otherwiſe, then in goodneſſe, grace and mercy. *Take away all iniquity.*

Queſt. Before I goe further, let me anſwer one Queſtion. *Ought wee not to thinke of our former ſinnes, ſhall God take them away altogether out of the ſoule?*

Anſw. O no! Take them away out of the conſcience O Lord that it doe not accuſe for them, but not out of the memory: it is good that ſinne be remembred, to humble us, to make us more thankfull, pitifull and tender-hearted unto

unto others, to abaſe us and keepe us low all the daies of our life, and to make us deale gently and mercifully with others being ſenſible of our owne frailties. As they are naught in the conſcience, ſo they are good to the memory. Therefore let us thinke often of this, what the chiefe deſire of our ſoules to God ſhould be for *mercy*, to have ſinne taken away. In all the Articles of our Creed, that of cheefeſt comfort is, That of *Remiſſion of ſinnes*. Wherefore are all the other Articles of Chriſt, his Birth, Death, and Crucifying, but that hee might get the Church, and that the priviledges thereof might be, *Forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, Reſurrection of the Body, and life everlaſting:* but *Forgiveneſſe of ſinnes* is in the firſt place.

Queſt. But may ſome ſay, How ſhall I know whether or no my ſinnes be forgiven?

1. By ſomething that goes before.
2. By ſomething which followes after.

Anſw. There is ſomewhat which goes before, *viz.* 1. *An humble and hearty Confeſſion*, as 1 *Ioh.* 1. 9. *if wee confeſſe our ſinnes, hee is faithfull and juſt to forgive us our ſinnes, and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſſe:* therefore, whether I feele it or not, if I have heartily, fully, and freely confeſſed: my ſins are forgiven. God in wiſedome and mercy may ſuſpend the feeling thereof, for our humiliation, and for being over-bold with Satans baites; yet I ought to beleeve it, for I make God a lier elſe, if I confeſſe heartily, and acknowledge my debt, to thinke that he hath not cancel'd the bond. Se-

1. By an hmble confeſſion.

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2. *When we finde ſtrength againſt it.* Mat. 9. 2, 6.

Secondly, ſin is certainely pardoned, when a man finds ſtrength againſt it, for where God forgives, he gives ſtrength withall: as to the man whom he healed of the Palſie. *Thy ſinnes are forgiven thee, take up thy bed and walke.* When a man hath ſtrength to returne to God, to run the way of his Commandements, and to go on in a Chriſtian courſe, his ſinnes are forgiven, becauſe he hath a Spirit of faith to goe on and leade him forward ſtill. Thoſe who find no ſtrength of grace, may queſtion forgiveneſſe of ſins, for God where he takes away ſin, and pardons it (as we ſee here in this Text after prayer made to *take away iniquity*) he *doth good to us*.

3. *Some peace of conſcience.*

The third evidence is, ſome peace of Conſcience, though not much perhaps, yet ſo much as ſupports us from deſpaire, as *Rom.* 5. 1. *Therfore being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt*, that is, being acquitted from our ſinnes by faith, wee have peace with God: ſo much peace, as makes us goe boldly to him: ſo that one may know his bonds are cancel'd and his ſins forgiven, when with ſome boldneſſe hee dare looke God in the face in Jeſus Chriſt. A *Iudas*, an *Achitophell*, a *Saul*, becauſe they are in the guilt of their ſinnes cannot confeſſe comfortably and goe to God: which when with ſome boldneſſe we can doe, it is a ſigne that peace is made for us.

4. *By love to God.*

Againe, where ſin is pardoned, our hearts will be much inlarged with love to God, as Chriſt ſaid to the woman, *Luke* 7. 47. *Her ſinnes which*

are

are many, are forgiven her, becauſe ſhe loved much. Therefore, when we finde our hearts inflamed with love to God, we may know that God hath ſhined upon our ſoules in the the pardon of ſin, and proportionablie to our meaſure of love, is our aſſurance of pardon, therefore wee ſhould labour for a greater meaſure thereof, that our hearts may be the more inflamed in the love of God. It is impoſſible that the ſoule ſhould at all love God angry, offended, and unappeaſed, nay, ſuch a ſoule wiſheth that there were no God at all, for the very thoughts thereof terrifie him.

5. *By mercifullnes to others.*

Againe, where ſinne is forgiven, it frames the ſoule ſuetably to be gentle, mercifull and to pardon others, for uſually thoſe who have peaceable conſciences themſelves, are peaceable unto others, and thoſe who have forgiveneſſe of ſins, can alſo forgive others; thoſe who have found mercy, have mercifull hearts, ſhewing that they have found mercy with God. And on the contrarie, hee that is a cruell mercileſſe man, it is a ſigne that his heart was never warmed nor melted with the ſenſe of Gods mercy in Chriſt. Therefore, *as the Elect of God* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *put on bowells of compaſſion:* as you will make it good that you are the Elect of God, members of Chriſt, and Gods children.

Their miſerable condition who have not forgiveneſſe of ſinnes.

Therefore, let us labour for the forgiveneſſe of our ſinnes, that God would remoove and ſubdue the power of them, take them away and the judgements due to them, or elſe wee are but miſerable

miſerable men, though we enjoyed all the pleaſures of the world, which to a worldly man are but like the liberty of the Tower to a condemned Traitor, who though hee have all wants ſupplied, with all poſſible attendance: yet when he thinkes of his eſtate, it makes his heart cold, dampes his courage, and makes him think the pooreſt Carman or tankerdbearer (at liberty) happier then hee, who would not change eſtates with him. So it is with a man that hath not ſued out his pardon nor is at peace with God, he hath no comfort ſo long as he knowes his ſins are on the file, that God in heaven is not at peace with him; who can arme all the Creatures againſt him to be revenged of him; in which caſe, who ſhall be Umpire betwixt God and us, if we take not up the controverſie betwixt him and our ſoules. Therefore it being ſo miſerable a caſe to want aſſurance of the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes; it ſhould make us be never an houre quiet till we have gotten it; ſeeing the uncertainty of this life, wherein there is but a ſtep betwixt Hell, Damnation and us. Therefore, ſue unto God, plie him with broken and humble hearts, that he would pardon all the ſins of our youth and after age, knowne and unknowne, that he would pardon all whatſoever: *Take away all iniquity.*

And do good to us.

For ſo it is in the Originall, but it is all one, *Receive us gratiouſly, and do good to us.* All the goodneſſe wee have from God it is out of his grace,

grace, from his free grace and goodneſſe, all grace, every little thing from God is grace: as we ſay of favours received of great perſons, this is his grace, his favour; ſo this is a reſpect which is put upon all things which we receive from God (when wee are in Covenant) all is gratious. Take wee the words as they are (the more plaine) in the Originall. *Take good, and doe good to us:* take good out of thy Treaſure of goodneſſe, and doe good to us, beſtow upon us thy owne good. Firſt, *Take away our iniquities*, and then take good out of thy bounty *and doe good to us*, whence we ſee,

That Gods mercy to his children is compleate and full.

Doct. That Gods favours are compleate to his children.

For hee takes away ill, and doth good, men may pardon but withal they think that they have done wondrous bountifully when they have pardoned, but Gods goes further, hee takes away ill and doth good: takes good out of his Fountaine, and doth good to us.

Therefore let us make this uſe of it, to be encouraged when we have the firſt bleſſing of all (Forgiveneſſe of ſinnes) to goe to him for more and more, and gather upon God further and further ſtill, for becauſe hee is a Fountaine of goodneſſe that can never bee drawne drie, hee is wondrouſly pleaſed with this. Wee cannot honour him more then by making uſe of his mercy in the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, and of his goodneſſe, in going to him for it, and having interreſted our ſelves in his goodneſſe, goe to

Uſe of incouragement.

him for more. Lord, thou haſt begun, make an end, thou haſt forgiven my ſinnes, I want this and this good, together with the pardon of my ſinnes doe mee good. *Receive us gratiouſly: or, doe us good.* Now good is the loadſtone of the ſoule, the attractive that drawes it, therefore (after Forgiveneſſe of ſinnes) he ſaith, *doe good.* The Petition is eaſie, God will ſoone grant it, for nothing elſe interpoſeth betwixt God and us, and makes two, but ſinne; which being remooved, he is all goodneſſe and mercy. *All his waies are mercy and truth.* Yea even his ſharpeſt waies are mercy, all mercy; when ſin is forgiven, there is goodneſſe in all, in the greateſt croſſe and affliction. *Doe good to us.*

That good is the loadſtone of the ſoule.

Pſal. 25. 10.

The ſoule wee ſee deſires *good*, and needs *good*; It is a tranſcendent word here, and muſt be underſtood according to the taſte of Gods people, of a ſanctified ſoule. *Doe good*, eſpecially doe ſpirituall good to us, together with the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, give us the righteouſneſſe of Jeſus Chriſt; ſanctifying grace, ſuch good, as may make us good firſt; for the deſire muſt bee ſuch as the perſon is who makes it. Wicked men (as it is ſaid of *Balaam*) have good gifts, without the good God: but wee muſt not bee ſo pleaſed with gifts, unleſſe wee bee good our ſelves, and ſee God making us good. *Can an evill tree bring forth good fruit?* Therefore the Apoſtle calls the regenerate perſon *Gods workemanſhip.* &c. We are Gods good worke, and then wee doe good workes, being made good,

That God appeares to bee good onely to a ſanctified ſoule.

Mat 7. 18.

good

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That asking of good, argues the ingenuity of confeſſing want and emptineſſe.

good comes from us, *Doe good to us.*

It is an acknowledgement of their owne emptineſſe, *Doe good to us.* We are blinde in our owne underſtandings, inlighten us; we are perplexed, ſet us right; we are dull, quicken us; we are empty, fill us; we are darke, ſhine upon us; we are ready to goe out of the way, eſtabliſh us; every way doe good to us ſuitable to our wants. The beſt that wee can bring to thee is emptineſſe, therefore doe thou doe good to us, fill us with thy fullneſſe. Do good to us every way whereby thou uſeſt to convey ſpirituall things to thy ſervants ſoules: give us firſt thy grace, thy Spirit, which is the ſpring of all good things; for the Spirit of God is a Spirit of direction, of ſtrength, of comfort, and all: therefore he who hath the Spirit of God hath the ſpring of all: that is begd in the firſt place. And then, give us good Magiſtrates to rule us well; and good Miniſters, who are the diſpenſers of grace, inſtruments of our ſalvation, the Conduit-pipes whereby thou deriveſt and conveyeſt good to us; when thou haſt made us good, continue the meanes of ſalvation for our good every way. The Church when ſhe ſaith, *Doe good to us*, hath a large deſire; here be ſeeds of wondrous large things in theſe two ſhort petitions, *Take away all iniquity, And doe good to us. A Bono Deo*, &c. From the good God nothing can come but what is good: therefore do good to us in all ſpirituall things. The Prophet *David* aimes at this excellent good, *Pſal.* 4. 6, 7.

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saying that other men are for corne, wine and oyle, and say; *who will shew us any good? But Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* Thy loving kindnesse is better then life, therefore doe good to us. When thou hast forgiven our sins, shine graciously upon us in Jesus Christ.

In the good desired outward prosperity is also included.

And it extends its limits likewise to outward prosperity (this desire of doing good) let us have happie daies, sweeten our pilgrimage here, let our profession of Religion bee comfortable, doe not lay more crosses upon us then thou wilt give us strength to beare, doe good to us every way. But marke the wisedome of the Holy Ghost in dictating of this Prayer to them: hee speakes in generall, *doe good to us*; not to doe this or that good, but he leaves it to the wisedome of God, as they here frame their hearts unto the will of God. *Doe good to us*, spirituall that needs no limitation, because wee cannot more honour God then to depend upon him for all spirituall good things. Thou art wiser, and knowest what is good for us better then we our selves, beggars ought to be no choosers, therefore, *Doe good to us*; for the particulars wee leave them to thy wisedome. O Beloved it is a happy and blessed priviledge to be under the conduct of so wise and All-sufficient a God, who is good, and as hee is good, knowes best what is good for us. We would have riches, liberty and health, I but it may bee it is not good for us, *Doe good to us.* Thou Lord knowest

knoweſt what is beſt, doe in thine owne wiſedome what is beſt.

Which ſhould teach us not to limit the Holy one of Iſrael in our deſires of any outward thing whatſoever. Eſpecially deſire forgiveneſſe and ſpirituall good things leaving the reſt to his wiſe diſpoſing. Yet notwithſtanding out of the ſenſe of paine and griefe wee may pray either for the mitigation or remooving of a croſſe if God bee ſo pleaſed; becauſe hee hath put in us ſelfe-love; not ſinnefull, but love of preſerving our nature; therefore he permits us (if it may ſtand with his good pleaſure) to deſire the good of our outward man, as, Lord give us bodily health, for we cannot elſe bee inſtruments of ſerving thee. With reſervation of Gods good pleaſure, wee may deſire ſuch and ſuch things; conditionally, that when we ſee God will have it otherwiſe, we reſt contented, ſit downe quietly, knowing that whatſoever health, ſickneſſe or croſſes hee ſends, it comes from his goodneſſe and love, and ſhall turne to our good at length: if wee love God, all ſhall worke for good.

Vſe.

Take away our iniquity and doe us good, wee ſhould make this petition for the Church and our ſelves, pardon our ſinnes and doe good to us, to our perſons, to the ſtate, to the times wherein we live, to the Church at home and abroad, doe good to all.

How to know when bleſſings enjoyed come from Gods love.

And we may obſerve this from the order; and know, what good wee have, it comes from God

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in love, when it comes after forgiveneſſe of ſinnes. How then may wee take comfort of all the good things we have enjoyed, having ſeene many good daies, enjoyed many good bleſſings, in health, wealth, good Magiſtracie, Miniſtery, Peace, plenty and the like? If all this goodneſſe of God leade us to God, and draw us neerer unto him *after forgiveneſſe of ſinnes* (grounded on the former evidences I ſpake of) then they come in love. But never let us thinke to have true comfort with a bleſſing, or any good thing we enjoy, till wee have aſſurance of Gods love and mercy in the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes; leaſt God ſtrip us naked of all the good things wee have, and make us as naked as *Dives* in Hell, who had not (any thing that was good) to refreſh his body or ſoule. So that all good things wee enjoy here without this, will onely aggravate our condemnation. Let us obſerve therefore, how all our good things are joyned with ſpirituall good, whether wee our ſelves are made better by them or not, having our ſinnes pardoned. I beſeech you let us renew our requeſts for forgiveneſſe of ſinnes every day, making our accounts even with God: deſiring grace to ſet our ſoules in a holy and ſanctified frame with God, that our ſelves may bee good, our converſation good: and that then, he would *doe good to us* all other waies, and ſanctifie all other things. This is the Method of Gods Spirit in ſetting us right onwards in our heavenly journey: firſt to have forgiveneſſe of ſins, then

then sanctification: to be better our selves, and then to looke for peaceable and comfortable daies in this world, if God see it good. What can bee more? *Take away all iniquity, and doe us good:* all manner of good.

Therefore since all *good* comes from God, the first and chiefe good, let us labour to have communion with him by all sanctified meanes, that so hee may take away our ill, and doe us every way good, to our soules, bodies, conditions. O what a blessed thing is it for a Christian to keepe a strict and neere communion with the fountaine of goodnesse, who can doe more for us then all the world besides. When we are sick on our death beds, or when conscience is throughly awaked, then to speake peace comfortably to us in this great extremitie, is more worth then all this world. Therefore let us labour to keepe communion with God, that he may speake peace to our soules when nothing else can.

I beseech you therefore let us take heed, how we breake or walke loosely with God, seeing wee can have no further comfort of any good thing we enjoy, then wee are carefull to keepe and maintaine our peace and communion with him at all times; and when we run into arrerages with God, then bee sure we lie not in sinne, but say, *Take away all iniquity, and doe good to us*, labouring to bee in such an estate, as God may give us his holy Spirit, both to make us good, and sanctifie unto us all other good.

in love, when it comes after forgiveneſſe of ſinnes. How then may wee take comfort of all the good things we have enjoyed, having ſeene many good daies, enjoyed many good bleſſings, in health, wealth, good Magiſtracie, Miniſtery, Peace, plenty and the like? If all this goodneſſe of God leade us to God, and draw us neerer unto him *after forgiveneſſe of ſinnes* (grounded on the former evidences I ſpake of) then they come in love. But never let us thinke to have true comfort with a bleſſing, or any good thing we enjoy, till wee have aſſurance of Gods love and mercy in the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes; leaſt God ſtrip us naked of all the good things wee have, and make us as naked as *Dives* in Hell, who had not (any thing that was good) to refreſh his body or ſoule. So that all good things wee enjoy here without this, will onely aggravate our condemnation. Let us obſerve therefore, how all our good things are joyned with ſpirituall good, whether wee our ſelves are made better by them or not, having our ſinnes pardoned. I beſeech you let us renew our requeſts for forgiveneſſe of ſinnes every day, making our accounts even with God: deſiring grace to ſet our ſoules in a holy and ſanctified frame with God, that our ſelves may bee good, our converſation good: and that then, he would *doe good to us* all other waies, and ſanctifie all other things. This is the Method of Gods Spirit in ſetting us right onwards in our heavenly journey: firſt to have forgiveneſſe of ſins,

then

then ſanctification: to be better our ſelves, and then to looke for peaceable and comfortable daies in this world, if God ſee it good. What can bee more? *Take away all iniquity, and doe us good:* all manner of good.

Therefore ſince all *good* comes from God, the firſt and chiefe good, let us labour to have communion with him by all ſanctified meanes, that ſo hee may take away our ill, and doe us every way good, to our ſoules, bodies, conditions. O what a bleſſed thing is it for a Chriſtian to keepe a ſtrict and neere communion with the fountaine of goodneſſe, who can doe more for us then all the world beſides. When we are ſick on our death beds, or when conſcience is throughly awaked, then to ſpeake peace comfortably to us in this great extremitie, is more worth then all this world. Therefore let us labour to keepe communion with God, that he may ſpeake peace to our ſoules when nothing elſe can.

I beſeech you therefore let us take heed, how we breake or walke looſely with God, ſeeing wee can have no further comfort of any good thing we enjoy, then wee are carefull to keepe and maintaine our peace and communion with him at all times; and when we run into arrerages with God, then bee ſure we lie not in ſinne, but ſay, *Take away all iniquity, and doe good to us*, labouring to bee in ſuch an eſtate, as God may give us his holy Spirit, both to make us good, and ſanctifie unto us all other good.

There bee good things, which are are good of themſelves, and which make all other things good. Thus by communion with God, we our ſelves are made good, and all other things likewiſe are made good to us; all his waies being mercy and truth unto thoſe who feare him. Therefore reſigne we our ſelves and all that we have unto his wiſedome and diſpoſing: becauſe oftimes there is good, where wee imagine the worſt of evills to be: as it is ſometimes good to have a veine opened, to be purged, the Phyſitian thinkes ſo, when yet the Patient, impatient of Reaſons iſſue, thinkes not ſo; But as the Phyſitian is wiſer then the Patient to know what is beſt for him; ſo God is wiſer then man to know what is good for him, who intends us no hurt when he purgeth us by affliction

Simile.

All our care therefore ſhould be, to annihilate our ſelves, to come with empty poore ſoules to God, *Doe good to us.* In which caſe, it is no matter what our ill bee, if hee doe us good, who hath both pardon and rich grace to remoove the evill of ſinne, and convey all grace unto us out of his rich Treaſurie.

So will we render the calves of our lips.

Here is the *Reſtipulation*, or promiſe, they Returne backe againe to God: for there is no friendſhip maintained without rendring: when God hath entred into Covenant with us; then there is a kinde of friendſhip knit up betwixt him and us (he becomming our friend) We muſt not therefore be like graves to ſwallow up all

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and returne nothing; for then the inter-courſe betwixt God and us is cut off. Therefore the ſame Spirit which teaches them to pray, and to *Take to them words*; teacheth them likewiſe to take unto them *words of Praiſe*, that there may bee a *Rendring*, according to *Receiving*; without which we are worſe then the pooreſt creature that is, which rendreth according to its receit. The *Earth* (when it is plowed and ſowed) it yeelds us fruit. *Trees* being ſet, yeeld increaſe: Beaſts being fed, render in their kind: yea the fierceſt untamed Beaſts, (as we reade of the Lyon) have been thankfull in their kinde; The Heavens (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) declare the glory of God and the firmament ſhewes forth his Praiſe. So there muſt be a Returne, if we be not worſe then beaſts. Therefore the Church here promiſeth a Returne by the ſame Spirit which ſtirred her up to pray. *So will wee render the Calves of our lips.* Pſal. 19. 10.

Now this promiſe which the Church makes here of praiſe is a kinde of vow: *So will we render*, &c. To binde ones ſelfe is a kinde of vow. The Church therefore bindes her ſelfe that ſhe may binde God; for binding her ſelfe by vow to Thankfullneſſe, ſhe thereby bindes God, who is mooved with nothing wee can doe ſo much as with ſetting forth of his Praiſe, which was his end in all the Creation, the ſetting forth of his glory. The end of the new Creature, is the end of all things both in nature and grace; the end whereof is Gods glory from whence all things

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things come, and wherein all things end: as we ſay of a circle, all things begin and ends in it. All other things are for man, and man for Gods glory; when the ſoule can ſay, Lord, this ſhall be for thy honour to ſet forth thy praiſe, it bindes God. Hence that they might moove God to yeeld to their prayers, they bind themſelves by a kinde of vow; Doe thus, O Lord, and thou ſhalt not looſe by it, thou ſhalt have praiſe, *So will wee render thee the Calves of our lips.*

So, Promiſes and vowes of praiſe are alleadged as an argument to prevaile with God, for the obtaining of that the Church begs for; *So will wee render*, &c. Not to enter into the common place of vowes, onely this much I ſay, that there is a good uſe of them, to vow and promiſe Thankefullneſſe when we would obtaine bleſſings from God. That which a promiſe is to men, that a vow is to God; and uſually they goe together in Scripture, as *Pſal.* 132. 2. It is ſaid of *David*, That *hee vowed unto God, and ſware unto the mighty God of Iaakob.* So wee have all in Baptiſme vowed a vow, ſo that it is good to renew our vowes often, eſpecially that of new obedience; and in this particular, to vow unto him, that wee will praiſe him, and ſtrive that his glory be no looſer by us.

Helpes and uſe of vowes.

I. *To excite, and quicken our dullneſſe.*

It is good thus to vow, if it were but to excite, and quicken our dullneſſe and forgetfullneſſe of our generall vow; to put us in minde of our duty, the more to oblige us to God and refreſh

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our memories. This bond, that having promiſed, now I muſt do it, provokes the ſoule to it, as it helpes the memory, ſo it quickens the affections.

2. *To be a bridle to our inconſtancy,*

Beſides, as by nature, wee are forgetfull, ſo we are inconſtant, in which reſpect, it is a tie to our inconſtant and unſteady nature, for there are none who have the Spirit of God at all with any tenderneſſe of heart, but will thus thinke; I have vowed to God, if it be a heinous thing to break with men, what is it wittingly and willingly to break with the great God? a vow is a kinde of oath; this is the ſacrifice of fooles, to come to God, and yet neither to make good our vowes, nor indeavour to doe it.

Let us conſider therefore, what we have done in this caſe. By permiſſion of authority there was a Faſt lately when wee all renewed our vowes (wee mocked God elſe) received the Communion. Will God be mocked thinke you? No, but howſoever man may forget, God will not, but will come upon us, for nonpaiment of our vowes and Covenants. Lay we it to heart therefore what Covenants wee have made with God of late. And then, for the time to come, be not diſcouraged if you have beene faulty in it. There is a generall vow, wherein though we have failed (if wee bee his children and break not with God in the maine, cleaving to him in purpoſe of heart, occaſionally renewing our purpoſes and Covenants) yet let not Satan diſcourage us for our unfaithfullneſſe

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neſſe therein; but bee aſhamed of it, watch more; looke better to it for the time to come, and make uſe of the gratious Covenant; and upon recoverie, ſay with the Church. *So will we render the Calves of our lips.*

It was the cuſtome under the Jewiſh pollicie (you know) to offer ſacrifices of all ſorts. But the Spirit of God ſpeakes here of the Church of the Jewes under the New Teſtament, eſpecially what they ſhould be after their Converſion, having reference to the Jewes in Chriſts time, and to the beleeving Jewes in all times, implying this much, howſoever not Legall ſacrifices, of *Calves*, *Bullocks*, *Sheepe* and *Lambes*, yet the *Calves of the lips*, which God likes better are acceptable to him. And it likewiſe implies ſome humiliation of the Church. Lord, whatſoever elſe wee could offer unto thee it is thine owne, though it were the beaſts upon a thouſand mountaines; but this (by thy grace) we can doe, to *Praiſe thee*. For God muſt open and circumciſe our lips and hearts, before wee can offer him *the Calves of our lips*. Thus much the pooreſt creature in the world may ſay to God, Lord, *I will render thee the Calves of my lips*, other things I have not, this I have by thy gratious Spirit, a heart ſomewhat touched by the ſenſe of thy favour: therefore, *I will render thee the Calves of my lips*, that is, *Praiſe*; as the Apoſtle hath it, *Heb.* 13.15. *By him therefore let us offer the Sacrifice of praiſe to God continually; that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thankes*

Pſal. 50.

thankes to his Name. [*So will wee render thee the Calves of our lips*] Whence the point is,

That Gods children at all times have their Sacrifices. *Doct.*

There is indeed one kinde of Sacrificing determined, and finiſhed by the comming of Chriſt, who was the laſt Sacrifice of propitiation for our ſinnes. The more to blame thoſe, who yet maintaine a daily Sacrifice, not of laud and praiſe, but of cozening and deluding the world in ſaying maſſe for the ſinnes of the quick and the dead, all ſuch Sacrifices being finiſhed and cloſed up in him (our bleſſed Saviour) who, *by one Sacrifice* (as the Apoſtle ſpeakes) *hath perfected them that are ſanctified:* and that; Heb. 10. 14. *By one Sacrifice when he offered up himſelfe*; when Heb. 7. 27. all the the Jewiſh Sacrifices ended, ſince which all ours, are but a commemoration of Chriſts laſt Sacrifice (as the Fathers ſay) The Lords Supper with the reſt: Which remaine ſtill, and the *Sacrifice of praiſe*, with a few others I deſire to name.

1. *The Sacrifice of broken heart*

Firſt, *The Sacrifice of a broken heart*, whereof *David* ſpeakes, *Pſal.* 51. 17. which Sacrifice of a wounded broken heart (by the knife of Repentance) pleaſeth God wondrouſly well.

2. *A broken heart offering Chriſt*

And then, *A broken heart that offers Chriſt to God every day*, who though hee were offered once for all: yet our beleeving in him, and daily preſenting his Attonement made for us, is a new offering of him. Chriſt is Crucified and Sacrificed for thee as oft as thou beleeveſt in Chriſt

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Chriſt Crucified. Now upon all occaſions wee manifeſt our Beleefe in Chriſt, to waſh and bathe our ſelves in his blood, who juſtifieth the ungodly, ſo that upon a freſh ſight of ſinne with contrition for it, hee continually juſtifieth us. Thus when we Beleeve we offer him to God daily, a broken heart firſt, and then Chriſt with a broken heart.

3. Our ſelves.

And then when wee beleeve in Chriſt, *wee offer and ſacrifice our ſelves to God*, in which reſpect we muſt (as it were) be killed ere we be offered; for wee may not offer our ſelves as we are in our luſts, but as mortified and killed by Repentance. Then we offer our ſelves to God as a reaſonable and living ſacrifice, when wee offer our ſelves wholy unto him, wit, underſtanding, judgement, affections and indeavour, as *Paul* ſaith of the *Macedonians*, *they gave themſelves to God firſt, and then their goods*. 2 Cor. 8. 5. In ſumme, it is that Sacrifice *Paul* ſpeakes of, *Rom.* 12. 1. *To preſent our bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God*, &c. for a Chriſtian who beleeveth in the Lord Jeſus, is not his owne, but ſacrificeth himſelfe to him that was Sacrificed for him. As Chriſt is given to us, ſo he that beleeves in Chriſt gives himſelfe backe againe to Chriſt. Hereby a man may know if he be a true Chriſtian, and that Chriſt is his; if he yeelds up himſelfe to God; for, *Chriſt died and roſe againe* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that hee might be Lord both of quick and dead*. Therefore (ſaith he) *whether we live or die, we are not our owne*, what wee doe

or

or ſuffer in the world, in all we are Sacrificed, ſo ſaith a ſanctified ſoule; my wit, my will, my life, my good, my affections are thine, of thee I received them; and I reſigne all to thee as a Sacrifice. Thus the Martyrs to ſeale the Truth (as a Sacrifice) yeelded up their blood. He that hath not obtained of himſelfe ſo much, as to yeeld himſelfe to God, he knowes not what the Goſpell meanes; for Chriſtian Religion is not onely to beleeve in Chriſt for forgiveneſſe of ſinne, but the ſame faith which takes this great benefit, renders backe our ſelves in liew of Thankefullneſſe.

So that, whatſoever we have (after we Beleeve) we give all back againe. Lord, I have my life, my will, my wit and all from thee, and to thee I returne all backe againe: for when I gave my ſelfe to beleeve in thy deare Sonne, I yeelded my ſelfe and all I have to thee: and now having nothing but by thy gift; if thou wilt have all, I will returne all unto thee againe; if thou wilt have my life, my goods, my liberty thou ſhalt have them. This is the ſtate of a Chriſtian who hath denied himſelfe, for wee cannot beleeve as we ſhould, unleſſe wee denie our ſelves. Chriſtianity is not altogether in beleeving this and that, but the faith which mooves mee to beleeve Forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, carries us alſo unto God, to yeeld all backe againe to him.

4. *Almes-deeds.*

More eſpecially, among the Sacrifices of the New Teſtament, are Almes, as *Heb.* 13.16. *To doe*

5. *The Sacrifice of Praiſe.*

doe good, and to communicate forget not, for with ſuch Sacrifices God is well pleaſed.

And (among the reſt) *The Sacrifice of Praiſe*, which is in the ſame Chapter ver. 15. firſt, hee ſaith, *by him* (that is, by Chriſt) *let us offer the ſacrifice of praiſe to God continually*, that is, *The fruit of our lips*, which is but an expoſition of this place, which becauſe it is eſpecially here intended; I will a little inlarge my ſelfe in.

The *Calves of our lips*, implies two things:

Not onely Thankefullneſſe to God;

But glorifying of God in ſetting out his praiſe; otherwiſe to thanke God for his goodneſſe to us, or for what wee hope to receive, without glorifying of him, is nothing at all worth. For in glorifying there are two things.

1. *A ſuppoſition of Excellencie*, for that cannot be glorified which hath no excellencie in it; glory in ſublimity, hath alway excellencie attending it. And

2. *The manifeſtation of this glory.*

Now when all the excellencies of God as they are, are diſcovered and ſet out, his *Wiſedome*, *Mercy*, *Power*, *Goodneſſe*, *All-ſufficiencie*, &c. then wee glorifie him. To praiſe God for his favours to us, and accordingly to glorifie him, is *The Calves of our lips*, but eſpecially to praiſe him. Whence the point is,

That the yeelding of praiſe to God, is a wondrous acceptable Sacrifice.

Which is inſteed of all the Sacrifices of the Old

Old Teſtament, then which, the greateſt can doe no more; nor the leaſt, leſſe, for it is the ſacrifice and fruit of the lips. But to open it, it is not meerely the ſacrifice of our lips; for the praiſe wee yeeld to God it muſt be begotten in the heart. Hereupon the word (λογὲς) ſpeech, ſignifieth both *Reaſon* and *Speech*, there being one word in the learned language for both. Becauſe, ſpeech is nothing but that ſtreame which iſſues from the ſpring of reaſon and underſtanding; therefore, in Thankeſgiving there muſt not be a lip-labour onely; but a Thankeſgiving from the lips, firſt begotten in the heart, comming from the inward man, as *Pſal.* 103. 1. The Prophet ſaith, *Bleſſe the Lord, O my ſoule, and all that is within mee, bleſſe his holy Name*; Praiſe muſt come from a ſound judgement of the worth of the thing we praiſe God for. It muſt come from an affection which deſires that God may have the glory, by the powers of the whole inward man, which is a hard matter to rouze up our ſelves to praiſe God with all the powers of our ſoule, *all that is within me, praiſe his holy Name.* There goeth Judgement, Reſolution of the will, ſtrength of affections, and all with it.

And then againe, beſides this, *The Calves of our lips*, carries us to worke. The orall Thankeſgiving muſt bee juſtified by our works and deeds; or elſe, our actions will give our tongue the lie, that wee praiſe him with the one, but denie him in the other. This is a Solo-

lociſme, as if one ſhould looke to the earth and cry O ye heavens? ſo when we ſay, God bee praiſed, when yet our life ſpeakes the contrary, it is a diſhonouring of God. So the praiſe of our lips muſt be made good and juſtified by our life, actions, and converſation: this wee muſt ſuppoſe for the full understanding of the words. *Wee will render* (from our hearts) *the Calves of our lips*, which we muſt make good in our lives and converſations, ever to ſet forth thy praiſe in our whole life.

Queſt. Why lips are mentioned for praiſe onely, Anſw.

But why doth the Prophet eſpecially mention *lips*; *The Calves of our lips*, which are our words.

1. Partly, *becauſe Chriſt who is the Word, delights in our words.*

2. Becauſe *our Tongue is our glory, and that whereby we glorifie God.*

3. And eſpecially, becauſe *our Tongue is that which excites others*

Being a trumpet of praiſe, ordained of God for this purpoſe. Therefore, *The Calves of our lips.* Partly, becauſe it ſtirres up our ſelves and others; and partly, becauſe God delights in words eſpecially of his owne dictating. To come then to ſpeake more fully of Praiſe and Thankeſgiving, let us conſider, what a ſweet, excellent and prevailing duty this is; which the Church (to bind God) promiſeth unto him, *The Calves of our lips.* I will not bee long in the point, but onely come to ſome helpes how we may come to doe it.

Helpes to praiſe God.

First,

First, this Praiſing of God muſt be from an humble broken heart, the humble ſoule that ſees it ſelfe not worthy of any favour, and confeſſeth ſinne before God, is alway a thankfull ſoule. Take away our iniquity, and then doe good to us, we are empty our ſelves; Then will we render thee the Calves of our lips. What made *David* ſo thankefull a man? He was an humble man; and ſo *Iaakob*; what abaſed him ſo in his owne eyes? his humility; *Lord I am leſſe then the leaſt of thy mercies.* He that thinkes himſelfe unworthie of any thing, will be thankfull for every thing, and he who thinkes himſelfe unworthy of any bleſſing, will be contented with the leaſt. Therefore, let us worke our hearts to humility, in conſideration of our ſinnefullneſſe, vileneſſe, and unworthineſſe, which will make us thankfull, eſpecially of the beſt bleſſings, when we conſider their greatneſſe, and our unworthineſſe of them. A proud man can never be thankfull. Therfore that Religion which teacheth pride, cannot bee a thankfull Religion, Popery is compounded of ſpirituall pride. *Merit of Congruity* before Converſion, *Merit of Condignity* and deſert of heaven after, Free-will and the like, to puffe up nature, what a Religion is this? muſt we light a candle before the divell? is not nature proud enough, but we muſt light a candle to it? to be ſpiritually proud is woirſt of all.

1. *It muſt bee from an humble broken heart.*

Gen. 32. 10.

And with our owne unworthineſſe, add this, *a conſideration of the greatneſſe of the thing we bleſſe*

2. *A due conſideration of the greatneſſe of the bleſſings.*

SER. II.

God for: ſetting as high a price upon it as wee can, by conſidering what and how miſerable we were without it. He will bleſſe God joyfully for pardon of ſin who ſees how miſerable he were without it, in miſery next to divels, ready to drop into hell every moment: and the more excellent we are, ſo much the more accurſed without the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes. For the ſoule by reaſon of the largeneſſe thereof, is ſo much the more capable and comprehenſible of miſery, as the divels are more capable then wee, therefore are moſt accurſed. O this will make us bleſſe God for the pardon of ſinne, and likewiſe, let us ſet a price upon all Gods bleſſings, conſidering what we were without our ſenſes, ſpeech, meate, drinke, reſt, &c. O beloved, we forget to praiſe God ſufficiently for our ſenſes. This little ſparke of Reaſon in us, is an excellent thing; grace is founded upon it, if we were without Reaſon, what were we? If we wanted ſight, hearing, ſpeech, reſt, and other daily bleſſings, how uncomfortable were our lives? This conſideration will add and ſet a price to their worth, and make us thankfull to conſider our miſery without them. But (ſuch is our corruption) that favours are more knowne by the want then by the enjoying of them, when too late we (many times) finde, how dark and uncomfortable we are without them, then ſmarting the more ſoundly; becauſe in time we did not ſufficiently prize, and were thankfull for them.

And

3. *To get assurance that we are in Gods love.*

And then, *labour to get further and further assurance, that wee are Gods children, beloved of him:* this will make us thankefull, both for what we have and hope for. It lets out the life blood of Thankefullnesse to teach doubting, or falling from grace. What is the end I beseech you why the glory to come is revealed before the time? that we shall be sonnes and daughters; Kings and Queenes; heires and co-heires with Christ; and all that he hath is ours? Is not this knowledge revealed before hand, that our praise and thankesgiving should before hand be sutable to this Revelation? being set with Christ in heavenly places already. Whence comes those strong phrases, *we are raised with Christ; sit with him in heavenly Places: are translated from death to life: Transformed into his image: Partakers of the divine nature,* &c. If any thing that can come betwixt our beleeving and our sitting there could disappoint us thereof, or unsettle us, it may as well put Christ out of Heaven, for we sit with him. If we yeeld to the uncomfortable Popish Doctrine of doubting, we cannot be heartily thankfull for blessings; for still there will rise in the soule surmises, I know not whether God favour me or not, it may bee I am onely fatted for the day of slaughter. God gives mee outward things to damne me, and make me the more inexcusable; what a cooler of praise is this, to be ever doubting and to have no assurance of Gods favour? But when upon good evidence (which cannot deceive) wee have

Eph 2.6.

Col. 1. 13.

2 Pet. 1. 4.

That Popish Doctrine of doubting kills Thankfullnesse to God.

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ſomewhat wrought in us diſtinct from the greater number of worldlings, Gods ſtampe ſet upon us, having evidences of the ſtate of grace, by conformity to Chriſt, and walking humbly by the Rule of the Word in all Gods waies. Then we may heartily be thankfull, yea and we ſhall breake forth in Thankeſgiving: this being an eſtate of *Peace*, and *joy unſpeakeable and glorious*, wherein we take every thing as an evidence of Gods love.

That aſſurance of being in the ſtate of grace, is the nurſe of Thankeſgiving.

Thus, the aſſurance of our being in the ſtate of grace, makes us thankfull for every thing: ſo by the contrary, being not in ſome meaſure aſſured of Gods love in Chriſt, wee cannot bee Thankfull for every thing. For it will alwaies come in our minde, I know not how I have theſe things, and what account I ſhall give for them. Therefore, even for the honour of God, and that we may praiſe him the more cheerefully, let us labour to have further and further evidences of the ſtate of grace, to make us thankfull both for things preſent and to come, ſeeing faith takes to truſt things to come, as if it had them in poſſeſſion: Whereby we are aſſured of this; that wee ſhall come to heaven, as ſure as if we were there already. This makes us praiſe God before hand for all favours: as bleſſed *Peter* begins his Epiſtle. *Bleſſed bee the God and Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt; which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us againe unto a lively hope, by the Reſurrection of Ieſus Chriſt from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth*

1 Pet. 1. 3.

fadeth not away, reſerved in heaven for you, &c. As ſoone as we are new borne, wee are begotten to a Kingdome, and an Inheritance: therefore aſſurance that we are Gods children, will make us thankfull for grace preſent and that to come, as if we were in Heaven already; we begin then the imployment of Heaven in thankeſgiving here to praiſe God before hand with *Cherubims* and *Angels*. Let us then be ſtirred up, to give God his due before hand, to begin Heaven upon Earth; for wee are ſo much in heaven already as we abound and are converſant in thankſgiving upon earth.

* * *

The end of the ſecond Sermon.

THE THIRD SERMON.

Hos. 14. 2, 3.

---So will we render the Calves of our lips.

Assur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the works of our hands, ye are our gods, for in thee the Fatherlesse findeth mercy.

THE words (as wee heard heretofore) containe a most sweet and excellent forme of Returning unto God, for miserable lost and forlorne sinners, wherein, so farre God discovers his willingnesse

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neſſe to have his people returne unto him, that he dictates unto them a forme of prayer, *Take with you words and turne to the Lord, ſay unto him Take away iniquity*. Wherein wee ſee how deteſtation of ſin muſt be as generall as the deſire of pardon: and that none heartily pray to God to *Take away all iniquity*, who have not grace truly to hate all iniquity. *And doe good to us*, or doe gratiouſly to us, for there is no good to us till ſin be remooved, though God bee goodneſſe it ſelfe: there is no provoking or meriting cauſe of mercy in us; but he findes cauſe from his owne gratious nature and bowels of mercy, to pitie his poore people and ſervants. It is his nature to ſhew mercy; as the fire to burne, a ſpring to runne, the Sun to ſhine: Therefore it is eaſily done (as the Prophet ſpeakes) *Who is a God like unto thee.*

Micah.7.18.

Where we came to ſpeake of the Reſtipulation, *So will wee render the Calves of our lips*: where Gods favour ſhines there will be a reflection, love is not idle, but a working thing: it muſt render or die; and what doth it render? divers Sacrifices of the New Teſtament which I ſpoke of, that of a broken heart, of Chriſt offered to the Father to ſtand betwixt Gods wrath and us; our ſelves as a living Sacrifice: Almesdeeds, and praiſe, which muſt bee with the whole inward powers of the ſoule.

Praiſe is not comely in the mouth of a foole (ſaith the Wiſeman) nor of a wicked man, as *Pſal.*50. 16,17. ſaith God to ſuch, *What haſt thou to doe*

to take my words in thy mouth ſince thou hateſt to bee reformed, and haſt caſt my words behind thee? There are a company who are ordinary ſwearers, and filthy ſpeakers; for them to praiſe God, *Iames* tells them, that theſe contrarie ſtreames cannot flow out of a good heart; O no: God requires not the praiſe of ſuch fooles. James 3.10.

I gave you alſo ſome Directions how to praiſe God, and to ſtirre up your ſelves to this moſt excellent duty, which I will not inſiſt on now, but add a litle unto that I then delivered, which is, *That we muſt watch all advantages of praiſing God, from our diſpoſitions. Is any merrie, let him ſing* (ſaith *Iames*) O, it is a great point of wiſedome, to take advantages with the ſtreame of our temper to praiſe God. When he doth incourage us by his favours and bleſſings, and inlarge our ſpirits, then we are in a right temper to bleſſe him: let us not looſe the occaſion. This is one Branch of redeeming of time, to obſerve what ſtate and temper of ſoule wee are in, & to take advantage from thence. Is any man in *heavineſſe?* he is fit to mourne for ſin: let him take the opportunity of that temper. Is any diſpoſed to *cheerefullneſſe*; let him ſacrifice that marrow, oyle, and ſweetneſſe of ſpirit to God. We ſee the poore birds in the ſpring-time, when thoſe little ſpirits they have are cheriſhed with the Sun-beames, how they expreſſe it in ſinging; ſo when God warmes us with his favours, let him have the praiſe of all. To take advantages of our diſpoſition James 5.13.

And

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A cenſure of thoſe who take the advantage of Gods bleſſings to feed their luſts.

And here, I cannot but take up a lamentation, of the horrible ingratitude of men, who are ſo farre from taking advantage by Gods bleſſings to praiſe him; that they fight (like Rebels) againſt him with his owne favours. Thoſe tongues which he hath given them for his glory, they abuſe to pierce him with blaſphemie, and thoſe other benefits of his lent them to honour him with, they turne to his diſhonour, like children, who importunately aske for divers things, which when they have, they throw them to the dog. So, favours they will have, which when they have obtained, they give them to the divell, unto whom they ſacrifice their ſtrength and cheerefullneſſe, and cannot be merrie, unleſſe they be madd and ſinnefull. Are theſe things to be tolerated in theſe daies of light? How few ſhall wee finde who in a temper of mirth turne it the right way?

Incouragement to Praiſe God.

But to add ſome incouragements to incite us to praiſe God, unto the former; I beſeech you let this be one, That *we honour God by it*; it is a well-pleaſing Sacrifice to him. If wee would ſtudie to pleaſe him, we cannot do it better then by praiſing him.

1. *We honour him by it.*

2. *It is the moſt gaineſull trading.*

And *it is a gainefull trading with God:* for in beſtowing his ſeed, where he findes there is improovement in a good ſoyle, with ſuch a ſanctified diſpoſition as to bleſſe him upon all occaſions, that there comes not a good thought, a good motion in the minde, but we bleſſe God who hath injected ſuch a good thought in our heart:

heart: there I ſay God delights to ſhower downe more and more bleſſings, making us fruitfull in every good worke to the praiſe of his Name. Sometimes we ſhall have holy and gratious perſons make a law, that no good or holy motion ſhall come into their hearts which they will not be thankfull for. O, when God ſeeth a heart ſo excellently diſpoſed, how doth it inrich the ſoule? It is a gainefull trade. As we delight to beſtow our ſeed in ſoyles of great increaſe, which yeeld ſixtie and an hundred fold, if poſſible: ſo God delights in a diſpoſition inclined to bleſſe him upon all occaſions: on whom he multiplies his favours.

3. *It is a moſt noble act of Religion.*

And then, in it ſelfe; *it is a moſt noble act of Religion*, it being a more baſe thing to be alwaies begging of God; but it argueth a more noble, raiſed and elevated ſpirit to bee diſpoſed to praiſe God. And it is an argument of leſſe ſelfe-love and reſpect, being therefore more gainefull to us. Yea, it is a more noble and royall diſpoſition, fit for Spirituall Kings and Prieſts thus to Sacrifice.

4. *Becauſe wee have more cauſe to give thanks then to pray.*

Againe, indeed *we have more cauſe to praiſe God then to pray, having many things to praiſe him for which wee never praied for*; Who ever prayed for his election, care of Parents in our infancy, their affection to us, care to breed and traine us to yeares of diſcretion; beſides thoſe many favours daily heaped upon us, above all that we are able to think or ſpeake. Therefore *Praiſe* being a more large Sacrifice then Prayer, we

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wee ought to be abundant in it. For thoſe that begin not Heaven upon earth, of which this praiſe is a maine function, they ſhall never come to Heaven, after they are taken from the earth; for there is no heavenly action, but it is begun upon earth: eſpecially this maine one, of joyning with Angels, Seraphims, and Cherubims in lauding God? Shall they praiſe him on our behalfe, and ſhall not wee for our owne? We ſee the Quire of Angels when Chriſt was borne, ſang, *Glory bee to God on high, on earth Peace, and good will towards men.* What was this for? Becauſe Chriſt the Saviour of the world was borne, whereby they ſhew, that we have more benefit by it then they. Therefore if we would ever joyne with them in Heaven, let us joyne with them upon Earth, for this is one of the great priviledges mentioned by the Author to the *Hebrewes*, unto which we be come too, *Communion with the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, and to the company of innumerable Angels*: we cannot better ſhew that we are come to that bleſſed eſtate and Society ſpoken of then by praiſing God.

Luke 2.14.

Heb. 12.22.

5. *Praiſing brings joy.*

And laſtly, *If we be much in praiſing God, wee ſhall bee much in joy*, which eaſeth miſerie; for a man can never be miſerable, that can be joyfull, and a man is alway joyfull when hee is thankfull. When one is joyfull and cheerefull, what miſery can lie upon him? Therefore it is a wondrous helpe in miſery to ſtirre up the heart to this ſpirituall Sacrifice of Thankeſgiving,

ving, by all arguments, meanes and occaſions. Our hearts are Temples, and we are Prieſts, we ſhould alway therfore have this light & Incenſe burning in our hearts, as the fire did alway burne on the Altar in *Moſes* time, that wee may have theſe ſpirituall Sacrifices to offer continually. Where this is not, the heart of that man or woman, is like *the abhomination of deſolation*, which (when the daily Sacrifice was taken away) was ſet up in the *Temple*. And certainely where there is not praiſing of God, the heart is *an abhomination of deſolation*, having nothing in it, ſave monſters of baſe luſts and earthly affections. Dan. 12. 11.

But how ſhall wee know that God accepts theſe Sacrifices of Praiſe? *Queſt.*

How did hee witneſſe the acceptation of thoſe Sacrifices under the old Law? *by fire from Heaven*; this was ordinary with them. So if we finde our hearts warme, cheared and incouraged with joy, peace, and comfort in praiſing God; this is as it were a witneſſe by fire from Heaven that our Sacrifices are accepted. Let this now ſaid be effectuall, to ſtirre you up to this excellent and uſefull duty of *Thankeſgiving*, without multiplying of more Arguments; ſave to put you in minde of this, that as we are exhorted to *delight our ſelves in the Lord*, one way (among the reſt) to doe it, is, to *ſerve him with cheerefullneſſe*, it is an excellent thing to make us delight in God, who loves a cheerefull giver, and Thankeſgiver. *So will wee render* Pſal. 37. 4.

Anſw. *How to know when our Thankeſgiving is accepted.*

render the Calves of our lips. But to proceed.

After this their ſolemne Covenant and promiſe of yeelding *Praiſe* to God, that if he would forgive all their ſinnes and doe good to them; then he ſhould have the beſt they could doe to him againe, (Praiſe) Here is *A Promiſe of new Obedience*, which hath two Branches,

1. *A Renunciation of the ill courſes they took before.*

Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, wee will not ride upon Horſes, neither will wee ſay any more to the workes of our hands, ye are our gods.

2. *Then there is a Poſitive duty implied*, in theſe words;

For, in thee, the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy.

Whereof, the one ſprings from the other; *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, wee will not ride upon Horſes, neither will we ſay any more to the workes of our hands, ye are our gods.* Whence comes all theſe? *for in thee, the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy.* Thou ſhalt be our *Rock*, our *Truſt*, our *Confidence* for ever: what will follow upon this? *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us any longer, we will not ride upon Horſes*, &c. for we have pitched and placed our confidence better; on him, in whom, *the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy.*

Aſhur ſhall not ſave us.

The Confidence which this people had placed, partly in *Aſhur*, their friends and aſſociates; and partly in their owne ſtrength at home; now (promiſing Repentance) they renounce all ſuch confidence in *Aſhur, Horſes,*

and

and Idols. Asshur shall not save us, &c.

First for this, *Asshur shall not save us*; that is, the *Assyrians*, whom they had on the one side, and the *Ægyptians* on the other: it being (as we see in the Prophecies of *Isay* and *Jeremie*) ordinary with Gods people, in any distresse to have recourse to the *Assyrians*, or *Ægyptians*; as if God had not beene sufficient to be their Rock and their shield. We see how often the Lord complaines of this manner of dealing. *Isay* 30. 2. & 31.1. *Woe unto them that goe downe into Ægypt for helpe, and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many*, &c. The Prophets (and so this Prophet) are very full of such complaints. It being one of the cheefe arguments he presseth, their falsenesse in this, that in any feare or perill, they ran to the shelter of other Nations, especially these two, *Ægypt*, and *Assyria*, as you have it, Chap. 12.1. *Ephraim feedeth on wind, and followeth after the East winde, hee daily increaseth lies and desolation, and they doe make a Covenant with the Assyrians; and oile is carried into Ægypt*, that is, Balme, who had this priviledge above all other nations, to abound in pretious Balmes: which balme and oile they carried for a present into *Ægypt*, to win their favour against the *Assyrians*. Sometimes they relied on the one, and sometimes on the other, the story and causes whereof were too tedious to relate, wherefore I come to the usefull points arising hence. *Asshur shall not save us.*

render the Calves of our lips. But to proceed.

After this their ſolemne Covenant and promiſe of yeelding *Praiſe* to God, that if he would forgive all their ſinnes and doe good to them; then he ſhould have the beſt they could doe to him againe, (Praiſe) Here is *A Promiſe of new Obedience*, which hath two Branches,

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Firſt for this, *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us*; that is, the *Aſſyrians*, whom they had on the one ſide, and the *Ægyptians* on the other: it being (as we ſee in the Prophecies of *Iſay* and *Ieremie*) ordinary with Gods people, in any diſtreſſe to have recourſe to the *Aſſyrians*, or *Ægyptians*; as if God had not beene ſufficient to be their Rock and their ſhield. Wee ſee how often the Lord complaines of this manner of dealing. *Iſay* 30. 2. & 31.1. *Woe unto them that goe downe into Ægypt for helpe, and ſtay on horſes, and truſt in chariots, becauſe they are many*, &c. The Prophets (and ſo this Prophet) are very full of ſuch complaints. It being one of the cheefe arguments he preſſeth, their falſeneſſe in this, that in any feare or perill, they ran to the ſhelter of other Nations, eſpecially theſe two, *Ægypt*, and *Aſſyria*, as you have it, Chap.12.1. *Ephraim feedeth on wind, and followeth after the Eaſt winde, hee daily increaſeth lies and deſolation, and they doe make a Covenant with the Aſſyrians; and oile is carried into Ægypt*, that is, Balme, who had this priviledge above all other nations, to abound in pretious Balmes: which balme and oile they carried for a preſent into *Ægypt*, to win their favour againſt the *Aſſyrians*. Sometimes they relied on the one, and ſometimes on the other, the ſtory and cauſes whereof were too tedious to relate, wherefore I come to the uſefull points ariſing hence. *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us.*

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1. *That man naturally is prone to put confidence in the creature.*

2. *That the creature is unsufficient and unable to yeeld us this prop to uphold our confidence.*

3. *That Gods people when they are endowed with light supernaturall, to discerne and bee convinced hereof, are of that minde to say* [*Ashur shall not save us.*]

But to make way to these things, wee must first observe two things for a preparative.

Doct. *That reformation must bee joyned with prayer and praise.*

First, *That Reformation of life must bee joyned with Prayer and Praise.* There was Prayer before, and a promise of Praise; but (as here) there must be joyn'd reformation of their sin. That it must be so it appeares. First for Prayer: it is said, *Psal.66.18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not heare my Prayer:* and for Praise; Pro.15.8. *The* very *sacrifice of the wicked* (who reformes not his waies) *is abominable:* so that without Reformation, Prayer and Praise is to no purpose. Therefore it is brought here after a promise of Praise. Lord as we meane to praise thee, so wee intend a through reformation of former sinnes whereof wee were guilty. We will renounce *Ashur* and confidence in *Horses, Idols* and the like. Therefore let us when we come to God with *Prayer* and *Praise*, thinke also of reforming what is amisse. Out with *Achan*; Iosh.7.19. if there bee any *dead flie* or *Achan* uncast out, Prayer and Praise is in vaine. Will you steale, lie, commit Adultery, sweare falsely, and come

and

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and ſtand before me (ſaith the Lord by the Prophet *Ieremiah*)? will you offer to *Pray* to me and *Praiſe* me living in theſe and theſe ſins? No, God will abhorre both that Prayer and Praiſe, where there is no reformation. *What haſt thou to doe to take my Name in thy mouth, ſince thou hateſt to be reformed, and haſt caſt my words behind thee?* ſaith God. Where he pleades with the Hypocrite for this audacious boldneſſe in ſevering things conjoyned by God. Therefore as we would not have our Prayers turned backe from Heaven, which ſhould bring a bleſſing upon all other things elſe. As wee would not have our ſacrifices abhominable to God, labour to reforme what is amiſſe, amend all, or elſe never thinke our lip-labour will proove any thing but a loſt labour, without this Reformation.

Ier 7.9.

Pſal. 50.16.

A *Second* thing which I obſerve in generall, before I come to the particulars, is,

That true Repentance is of the particular ſinne which wee are moſt addicted to, and moſt guilty of.

Doct.

The particular ſinne of this people (whom God ſo inſtructs here) was their confidence in *Aſſyria*, *Horſes* and *Idols*. Now therefore Repenting, they repent of the particular maine ſinnes they were moſt guilty of, which being ſtricken downe, all the leſſer will bee eaſie to conquer. As when *Goliah* himſelfe was ſtricken downe, all the hoſt of the *Philiſtims* run away. So when *Goliah* ſhall be ſlaine in us, the reigning

1 Sam 17.51.

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ruling domineering ſinne, the reſt will eaſily be conquered.

Vſe.
Triall of Repentance.

Therefore let us make an Uſe of *Examination* and triall of our Repentance. If it be ſound, it drawes with it a reformation, as in generall, ſo eſpecially of our particular ſinnes, as thoſe, 1 *Sam.* 12. 8. confeſſe and ſay, *Above all other things wee have ſinned in this, in asking a King.* We were naught and had offended God many waies before, but herein we have beene exceeding ſinnefull, in ſeeking another Governour, being weary of Gods gratious Governement over us. So a gratious heart will ſay, I have beene a wretch in all other things, but in this and that ſin above al other. Thus it was with the woman of *Samaria*, when ſhe was put in minde by Chriſt of her particular grand ſinne, that ſhe had beene a light woman and had had many husbands, he whom ſhe lived with now not being her husband. This diſcoverie (when Chriſt touched the galled part) did ſo worke upon her conſcience, that it occaſioned a generall repentance of all her other ſinnes whatſoever. And indeed ſound repentance of one maine ſin, will draw with it all the reſt. And for the moſt part when God brings any man home to him, he ſo carries our repentance, that diſcovering unto us our ſinnefullneſſe, he eſpecially ſhewes us our *Dalilah*, *Iſaack*, *Herodias*, our particular ſinne, which being caſt out, we prevaile eaſily againſt the reſt. As the charge was given by the King of *Aram* againſt *Ahab*, *fight neither againſt greas*

Joh. 4. 18.

2 Chron. 18. 30

great nor ſmall, but onely againſt the King of Iſrael, kill him, and then there will bee an end of the battell. So let us not ſtand ſtriking at this and that ſinne which wee are not ſo much tempted to, if we will indeed proove our repentance to be ſound, but at that maine ſinne which by nature, calling or cuſtome we are moſt prone unto. Repentance for this cauſes Repentance for all the reſt, as here the Church ſaith, *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, we will not ride upon horſes*, &c.

It is a grand impoſture, which carries many to Hell, they will cheriſh themſelves in ſome groſſe maine ſinne, which pleaſes corrupt nature, and is advantagious to them: and by way of compenſation with God they will doe many other things well, but leave a dead flie to marre all. Whereas they ſhould begin here eſpecially. This much in generall, which things premiſed, I come to the forenamed particulars. Firſt,

That naturally we are apt and prone to confidence in outward helps and preſent things. Doct.

This came to our nature from the firſt fall; what was our fall at firſt? A turning from the All-ſufficient unchangeable God to the creature. If I ſhould deſcribe ſinne, it is nothing but a turning from God to one creature or other, when we find not contentment and ſufficiencie in one creature, we run to another, as the bird flies from one tree and bough to another, ſo we ſeeke varietie of contentments from one thing to another, ſuch is the pravitie of our nature ſince the fall. This is a fundamentall concluſion;

man naturally will, and muſt have ſomewhat to relie on. The ſoule muſt have have a bottome, a foundation to reſt on, either ſuch as the world affoords, or a better. Weake things muſt have their ſupports: as wee ſee, the Vine being a weake thing, is commonly ſupported by the Elme or the like ſupplie. So it is with the ſoule ſince the fall: becauſe it is weake, and cannot uphold nor ſatisfie it ſelfe with it ſelfe, therefore it lookes out of it ſelfe. Looke to God it cannot till it be in the ſtate of grace, for being his enemie, it loves not to look to him or his waies, or have dealing with him; therefore it lookes unto the creature, that next hand unto it ſelfe. This being naturall ſince the fall, that what we had in God before when we ſtood, we now labour to have in the creature.

Reaſon 1. *Loſſe of former communion with God.*

Becauſe (as was ſaid) having loſt Communion with God, ſomewhat we muſt have to ſtay the ſoule.

2. *Abuſe of our fancie.*

Secondly, becauſe Satan joynes with our ſenſe and fancie, by which wee are naturally prone to live, eſteeming of things, not by faith and by deeper grounds, but by fancie. Now fancie having communion with ſenſe, what it diſcovers and preſents for good and great; *fancie* makes it greater, and the divell above all having communion with that facultie of *fancie*, and ſo a ſpirit of error being mixed therewith, to make our fancie thinke the riches of the world to be the onely riches: The greatneſſe and goodneſſe of the creature, to bee the onely great-

How our fancies come to be ſo abuſed, as to doate on the creature.

greatneſſe and goodneſſe, and the ſtrength thereof, the onely ſtrength: This ſpirit of error joyning with our owne ſpirits, and with the deceit of our natures, makes us ſet a higher value on the creature, inlargeth and inrageth the fancie, making it ſpiritually drunk ſo as to conceive amiſſe of things.

Briefely for Uſe hereof, it being but a directing point to others. Let us take notice of our corruption herein and be humbled for it, taking in good part thoſe afflictions and croſſes which God ſends us to convince and let us ſee that there is no ſuch thing in the creature as we imagined. Becauſe naturally, wee are deſperately given to thinke that there is ſomewhat more therein then there is. Now affliction helpes this ſickneſſe of fancie, imbittering unto us all confidence in the creature. Therefore it is a happie and a bleſſed thing to be croſſed in that which we overvalue, as theſe *Iſraelites* heere did, the *Aſſyrians* and the *Ægyptians*: for being enemies, they truſted in a *broken reed*, as we ſhall ſee further in the ſecond point,

Vſe.

How theſe outward things cannot help us.

Doct.

That the creature cannot helpe in our eſpeciall need.

How prone ſo ever we are to rely upon them, they are in effect nothing, they cannot helpe us, and ſo are not to be relied upon. *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us.* Indeed it will not, it cannot; theſe things cannot aid us at our moſt need. So that that which we moſt pitch upon, failes us when we ſhould eſpecially have helpe; ſome preſent vaniſhing ſupply they yeeld: but little to pur-

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poſe. They have not that in them, which ſhould ſupport the ſoule at a ſtraite or great pinch as we ſay.

Reaſon. The Reaſon is largely given by *Salomon* in the whole booke of *Eccleſiaſtes*, *All is vanity and vexation of ſpirit*. There is a vanity in all the creatures, being emptie and not able to ſupport the ſoule. They are vaine in their continuance, and emptie in regard of their ſtrength, they are gone when wee have need of them. *Riches* (as the Wiſeman ſaith) are gone, and have wings to flie away in our moſt need. So *Friends*, are fugitive good things, being like to the brooks mentioned in *Iob*: which when in Summer there is need of, then they are dried up, and yet run amaine in Winter when there is no need of them. So earthly ſupports, when there is no need of them, then they are at hand, but when we have moſt need of them are gone. *They are broken Ciſternes*, as the Prophet calls them: *Ciſternes*, that is, they have a limited capacity, a Ciſterne is not a ſpring: ſo all their ſupport (at the beſt) is but a bounded and a mixed ſufficiency, and that alſo which will quickly faile. Like water in a Ciſterne, which if it be not fed with a continuall ſpring, failes or putrifies preſently. Likewiſe theſe outward things are not ſufficient for the grievance, for being limited & bounded, the grievance will bee above the ſtrength of the creature; which though ſometime it be preſent and doe not faile, yet the trouble is ſuch that it is above the ſtrength of the crea-

Pro. 23. 5.

Iob 6. 15.

Ier. 2. 13.

creature to helpe. So that for theſe and the like reſpects, there is no ſufficiency nor helpe to bee expected from the creature. *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us*, hee is not a ſufficient ground of truſt. Why?

1. *He is but a Creature.*
2. *He is an Enemie.*
3. *He is an Idolater.*

So that, take him in all theſe three relations, he is not to be truſted.

1. *He is a Creature*, what is a Creature? nothing as it were, ſaith the Prophet, *all creatures before him are as nothing, and as a very little thing*; and what it is, when he pleaſeth he can diſſolve it into nothing, turne it into duſt. Mans breath is in his noſtrills, all fleſh is graſſe, and all his glory as the flower of graſſe. If a man truſt the creature, he may outlive his truſt, his prop may be taken from him and downe he falls. *Aſhur* muſt not be truſted therfore as a *Creature*; nor as a *Man*, for that brings us within the Curſe: *Ier.* 17.5. Thus ſaith the Lord, *Curſed be the man that truſteth in man, and maketh fleſh his arme*, &c. So truſting in the creature not onely deceives us, but brings us within the Curſe. In that reſpect, *Aſhur* muſt not be truſted.

But *Aſhur* likewiſe was an Enemy, and a ſecret enemie: for howſoever the ten Tribes unto whom *Hoſea* prophecied were great Idolaters, yet they were ſomewhat better then *Aſhur*, who was without the pale of the Church, and a wholy corrupted Church: therefore they were

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were enemies to the ten Tribes, and amongſt other reaſons, becauſe they were not ſo bad as they, nor deeply enough died with Idolatry.

Many thinke they may complie with Popery in ſome few things to gaine their love, and that there may be a joyning with them in this and that: but doe we thinke that they will ever truſt us for all this? No, they will alway hate us till we be as bad as they, and then they will deſpiſe us, and ſecure themſelves of us. Therefore there is no truſting of Papiſts, as Papiſts: not onely *Creatures*, but as falſe, and as enemies. For this is the nature of wicked men, they will never truſt better then themſelves, till they become as bad as they are, after which they deſpiſe them; ſay they, now we may truſt ſuch and ſuch a one, he is as bad as we, becom'd one of us. Which is the reaſon why ſome of a naughty diſpoſition take away the chaſtity and virginity of mens conſciences, making them take this and that evill courſe: and then they thinke they have ſuch ſafe, being as bad as themſelves. Wherein they deale as *Achitophels* politique diveliſh counſell was, that *Abſolom* ſhould doe that which was naught, and then he ſhould be ſure that *David* and he ſhould never agree after that: and that then by this diſcovery, the wicked Jewes ſet on miſchiefe might ſecure themſelves of *Abſolom*. So they, now that they joyne with us, God will forſake them, we ſhall have them our inſtruments for any thing. Firſt, they would have the ten Tribes as bad as they,

2 Sam. 16. 21.

they, and then gave them the ſlip whenſoever they truſted them.

Againe, neither were they to be truſted as *Idolaters*, to have league and ſociety with them. There may be ſome commerce and traffique with them, but amity and truſt none. *Aſhur* and *Ægypt* were horrible Idolaters and therefore not to bee truſted in that reſpect. As we ſee the Prophet in this caſe reprooved good *Iehoſhaphat* when he had joyn'd with wicked *Ahab*, King of the ten Tribes: *ſhouldeſt thou helpe the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? therefore wrath is upon thee from before the Lord.* So we ſee it is a dangerous thing to bee in league with Idolaters; even ſuch as the ten Tribes were, who had ſome Religion amongſt them: this good King was chidden for it. 2 Chron. 19. 2

We will not ride upon Horſes.

What kinde of creature a Horſe is, it is worth the ſeeing, what a deſcription God gives of him, that we may ſee what reaſon the Spirit of God hath to inſtance in the *Horſe*, ſaith God to *Iob. Haſt thou given the Horſe ſtrength? Haſt thou clothed his neck with thunder? Canſt thou make him afraid as a graſhopper? The glory of his Noſtrills is terrible: Hee paweth in the valley, and rejoyceth in his ſtrength, hee goeth on to meete the armed men. He mocketh at feare, and is not affrighted: neither turneth he backe from the ſword. The quiver ratleth againſt him, the glittering ſpeare and the ſhield. He ſwalloweth the ground with fierceneſſe and rage, neither beleeveth hee that it is the ſound* Job 39. 19, 20, 21, &c.

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ſound of the trumpet: He ſaith among the Trumpets, Ha, Ha; and hee ſmelleth the battell afarre of, the thunder of the Captaines and the ſhouting. A notable and excellent deſcription of this warlike creature: and yet for all this excellencie ſo deſcribed by the Spirit of God, in another place, the Pſalmiſt ſaith, *A Horſe is a vaine thing for ſafety, neither ſhall he deliver any by his great ſtrength*; *Some truſt in Chariots and ſome in Horſes: but wee will remember the name of the Lord our God.* So in another place, *The Horſe is prepared againſt the day of battell, but victory is of the Lord.*

Pſal. 33. 17.

Pſal. 20. 7.

Pro. 21. 31.

How oft have you in the *Pſalmes*, that proud warlike creature diſparaged, becauſe naturally men are more bewitched with that, then with any other creature. If they have ſtore of Horſes, then they thinke they are ſtrong. Therefore, *God forbids the King to multiplie Horſes to himſelfe: nor cauſe the people to returne to Ægypt, to the end he ſhould multiplie Horſes*, &c. Becauſe God is the ſtrength of his Church, when there is no multitude of Horſes: You ſee it is a bewitching creature, and yet a vaine helpe, a place like this we have, *Iſa.* 2. 7. complaining there of the naughty people which were among the Jewes, at that time as bad as the Iſraelites. Saith he, *Their land alſo is full of ſilver and gold; neither is there any end of their treaſures, their land is alſo full of Horſes, neither is there any end of their Chariots.* What is there a fault in that? No. *Luther* ſaith, good workes are good, but the confidence

Deut. 17. 16.

Iſa. 2. 7.

confidence in them is damnable. So gold and ſilver, Horſes and Chariots are good creatures of God. But this was their ſin, confidence in theſe things: *there is no end of their treaſures*; if they had treaſure enough, they ſhould doe well enough. *Their land alſo was full of Horſes.* Was this a fault? No, but their confidence in them: they thought they were a wiſe people to have ſuch furniture and proviſion of munition for warre: but God was their King, and the chiefe governour of his people, and for them to heape up theſe things, to truſt over much in them, it was a matter of complaint, *Their land alſo is full of Idols.*

That there is no confidence to be put, either in Home, or forraigne forces.

Thus you ſee there is no confidence to be put neither in the one nor the other: neither in the aſſociation of forraine friends, who will proove deceitfull; *reeds of Ægypt*, that not onely deceive, but the ſplinters thereof flie about, and may run up into the hand; ſuch are Idolaters and falſe friends, deceitfull and hurtfull. Nor in *Home*, there is no truſt, in *Horſes*, munition or ſuch like. What doth this implie, that to warre and have proviſion in that kinde is unlawfull, and unneceſſary, becauſe hee findes fault here with *Horſes* and the like? No, take heed of that, for *Iohn Baptiſt* if the ſouldiers profeſſion had beene unlawfull, he would have bid them caſt away their weapons, but he bids them, *Doe violence to no man, neither accuſe any falſely, &c.* And God would never ſtyle himſelfe, *The Lord of Hoſts, and a man of warre, and he that teacheth our*

Luk. 3. 14.

Iſa. 42. 13.

Pſal. 18. 34.

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our hands to warre, and our fingers to fight, unleſſe it were good in the ſeaſon: therefore warre is lawfull, ſeeing in the way to Heaven wee live in the midſt of enemies.

That warre is lawfull.

Therefore it is but an Anabaptiſticall fancie, to judge warre to be unlawfull: No, no, it is cleane another thing which the Holy Ghoſt aimes at: to beate backe carnall confidence. For it is an equall fault, to multiplie helpes, and to neglect them: either of both are fatall many times, to multiplie Horſes truſting in them, or to ſpoile Horſes and other helpes vainely, ſo to weaken a Kingdome. Therefore there is a middle way for all outward things, a fit care to ſerve Gods providence, and when we have done truſt in God without tempting of him. For to neglect theſe helpes is to tempt him; and to truſt in them (when we have them) is to commit Idolatry with them. Beware of both theſe extreames, for God will have his providence ſerved in the uſe of lawfull meanes: when there is this great care in a Chriſtian Common-wealth; there is a promiſe of good ſucceſſe: becauſe God is with us: otherwiſe what is all, if he be our enemie? So we ſee the ſecond point made good, *That theſe outward things of themſelves cannot helpe.* Therefore comes this in the third place,

Obſerv.

That when God alters and changes and moldeth a new the heart of a man to Repentance, he alters his confidence in the creature.

A Chriſtian ſtate will not truſt in *Aſſur*, nor in

in *Horſes*, it is true both of ſtate and perſons. The Reaſon will follow after in the end of the verſe: *For in thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy*. Because, when a man hath once repented, there is a cloſing betweene God and him, and hee ſeeth an All-ſufficiency in God to ſatisfie all his deſires. Therefore he will uſe all other things as helpes, and as farre as it may ſtand with his favour. For, he hath *Moſes* eye put in him, a new eye to ſee him that is inviſible, to ſee God in his greatneſſe, and other things in their right eſtimate as vaine things. What is Repentance, but a change of the minde, when a man comes to be wiſe and judicious, as indeed repentant men are the onely wiſe men. Then a man hath an eſteeme of God to bee *Elſhady*, All-ſufficient, and all other things to be as they are uncertaine; that is, they are ſo to day, as that they may be otherwiſe to morrow: for that is the nature of the creatures, they are in *Potentia*, in a poſſibility to bee other things then they are. God is alway, *I am*, alway the ſame, there is not ſo much as a ſhadow of changing in him. Wherefore when the ſoule hath attained unto this ſpirituall eye-ſight and wiſedome; if it be a ſinnefull aſſociation with *Ægypt* or *Aſhur*, with this Idolater or that, he will not meddle; and as for other helpes, he will not uſe them further then as ſubordinate meanes. When a man is converted, he hath not a double, not a devided heart; to truſt partly to God, and partly to the creature: If God faile him he hath *Aſhur* and

Reaſon.

Heb. 11 27.

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and horſes enough, and aſſociation with all round about, but a Chriſtian hee will uſe all helpes as they may ſtand with the favour of God, and are ſubordinate under him. Now for Triall.

Queſt. How ſhall we know whether wee exceed in this confidence in the creature or not.

Sol. 1. We may know it by adventuring on ill courſes and cauſes, thinking to beare them out with *Aſhur*, and with *Horſes*: but all the mercinary ſouldiers in the world, and all the Horſes at home and abroad, what can they doe when God is angry? Now, when there is ſuch confidence in theſe things as for to outdare God, then there is too much truſt in them; that truſt will end in confuſion, if it be not repented of; for that lifts up the heart in the creature, and as the Heathen man obſerves, God delights to make great little, and little great. It is his daily worke to caſt downe mountaines, and exalt the valleys. Thoſe that are great, and boaſt in their greatneſſe, as if they would command Heaven and Earth, God delights to make their greatneſſe little, and at length nothing, and to raiſe up the day of ſmall things. Therefore the Apoſtle ſaith, *if I rejoyce, it ſhall bee in my infirmities*, in nothing elſe; for God delights to ſhew ſtrength in weakeneſſe. 1 Cor. 12, 9.

2. By ſecurity and reſting of the ſoule in meaner things; never ſeeking to divine and religious helpes, when we are ſupplied with thoſe that are outward. For theſe people when they truſted

ſted to *Aſſyria*, and *Ægypt*, thoſe falſe ſupports and ſandie foundations, they were careleſſe of God, and therefore muſt truſt in ſomewhat elſe. Wherefore if we ſee a man ſecure and careleſſe, certainely he truſts too much to uncertaine riches, to *Aſhur*, to *Ægypt*, to friends, or to outward helpes, his ſecurity bewraies that. If a man truſt God in the uſe of the meanes, his care will be to keepe God his friend by Repentance and daily exerciſes of Religion, by making conſcience of his duty. But if he truſt the meanes and not God, he will be careleſſe and weake in good duties, dull and ſlow, and (out of the Atheiſme of his heart) cry Tuſh, if God do not helpe me, I ſhall have helpe from friends abroad, and be ſupported with this and that at home, Horſes and the like, all ſhall be well.

Vſe. 1. Let us therefore enter into our owne ſoules, and examine our ſelves, how farre forth we are guilty of this ſinne, and thinke we come ſo farre ſhort of Repentance: for the ten Tribes here, the people of God when they repented, ſay, *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, wee will not ride upon Horſes*; he ſpeakes comparatively, as truſted in. Therefore let us take heed of that boaſting vaine-glorious diſpoſition ariſing from the ſupply of the creature: Saith God, *Let not the wiſe man glory in his wiſdome, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that hee underſtandeth and knoweth this, that I am the Lord, which exerciſe loving kindneſſe, judge-* Ier. 9. 23.

ment and righteouſneſſe in the earth, &c. Let a man glorie that he knowes God in Chriſt to bee his God in the Covenant of grace: that hee hath the God of all ſtrength, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords to be his: who hath all other things at his command; who is independant, and All-ſufficient. If a man will boaſt, let him goe out of himſelfe to God, and plant himſelfe there, and for other things take heed the heart be not lift up with them.

1. *That boaſting is Idolatry.*

Conſider, what kinde of thing boaſting is, it is Idolatry, for it ſets the creature in the place and roome of God. And it is alſo ſpirituall Adulterie, whereby we fixe our affections upon the creature which ſhould be placed on God, as it is in *Iames*, *Ye adulterers and adultereſſes, know ye not that the friendſhip of the world, is enmity with God?* &c. *Habakuk* calls it Drunkenneſſe, for it makes the ſoule drunk with ſottiſhneſſe and conceitedneſſe, ſo as a man (in this caſe) is never ſober, untill God ſtrip him of all. And then againe, it puts out the eye of the ſoule, it is a kinde of white that marres the ſight: when a man lookes to *Aſhur*, *Horſes*, and to outward ſtrength, where is God all this while? theſe are as ſo many clouds that they cannot ſee God, but altogether pore upon the creature: he ſees ſo much greatneſſe there, that God ſeemes nothing. But when a man ſees God in his Greatneſſe and Almightineſſe, then the creature is nothing: but untill this be, there is a miſt and blindneſſe in the eye of the ſoule.

2. *Adultery.* Iam. 4.4.

3. *Drunkenneſſe.* Habak. 2.4,5.

4. *Boaſting cauſeth blindneſſe.*

Job 42.6.

And

And when we have ſeene our guiltineſſe this way (as who of us in this caſe may not be confounded and aſhamed of relying too much on outward helpes?) then let us labour to take off our ſoules from theſe outward things, whether it be ſtrength abroad or at home. Which that we may doe, we muſt labour for that Obedience which our Saviour Chriſt exhorts us unto in *ſelfe-deniall*, not to truſt to our owne deviſes, policie, or ſtrength; wit, will, or conceipts that this or that may helpe us, nor any thing: make it generall. For when Converſion is wrought, and the heart is turned to God, it turnes from the creature, onely uſing it as ſubordinate to God. We ſee uſually, men that exalt themſelves in confidence either of ſtrength of wit, or whatſoever, they are ſucceſſeleſſe in their iſſue: for God delights to confound them, and goe beyond their wit: as we have it, *Iſay* 30. They thought to goe beyond God with their policie, they would have helpe out of *Ægypt*, this and that way. O ſaith the Prophet: but for all this, God is wiſe to ſee through all your deviſes: ſecretly hereby touching them to the quick, as ſottiſh perſons who thought by their ſhallow brainés to goe beyond God; you thinke Religious courſes, and the obedience God preſcribeth to you to be idle needleſſe courſes, but notwithſtanding God is wiſe, he will goe beyond you and catch you in your owne craft. *Therefore, the ſtrength of Pharaoh ſhall be your ſhame, and the truſt in the ſhadow of Ægypt your confuſion.* Mat. 16. 24. Iſa. 30. 3.

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Gen. 11. 8.

Thus God loves to ſcatter *Babels* Fabriques and Holds that are erected in confidence of humane ſtrength againſt him; he delights to catch the wiſe in their owne craft; to beat all downe, lay all high imaginations and things flat before him; that no fleſh may glory in his ſight. There is to this purpoſe a notable place in *Iſay*. *Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compaſſe your ſelves about with ſparkes*: (for they kindled a fire and had a light of their owne, and would not borrow light from God:) *Walke in the light of your fire, and in the ſparks that ye have kindled*, but what is the concluſion of all? *This ſhall ye have of mine hand*, I dare aſſure you of this, ſaith the Prophet: *You ſhall lie downe in ſorrow*: thoſe that walke by the light and ſparke of their owne fire; this they ſhall have at Gods hands; they ſhall lie downe in ſorrow.

Iſa. 55. 11.

Danger of carnall confidence.

Let us therefore take heed of carnall confidence. You have a number who love to ſleepe in a whole skinne, and will bee ſure to take the ſafeſt courſes (as they thinke) not conſulting with God, but with fleſh and blood. It might bee inſtanced in ſtories of former times how God hath croſſed Emperours and great men in this kind, were it not too tedious. But for preſent inſtance, you have many who will be of no ſetled Religion, O they cannot tell, there may be a change, therefore they will be ſure to offend neither part: this is their policie, and if they be in place, they will reforme nothing; O I ſhall lay my ſelfe open to advantages, and ſtirre up enemies

enemies againſt me: and ſo they will not truſt God, but have carnall devices, to turne off all duty whatſoever. It is an ordinary ſpeech, but very true: *Policie overthrowes Policie.* It is true of carnall Policie, when a man goes by carnall rules to be governed by Gods enemy, and his owne; with his owne wit and underſtanding, which leades him to outward things: this kinde of Policie overthrowes all policie and outward governement at length. Thoſe that walke Religiouſly and by Rule, they walke moſt confidently and ſecurely as the iſſue will ſhew; Therefore, conſider that (ſet God aſide) all is but vanity, And that

In what reſpects the creature is ſo empty.

1. *They deceive our expectation.*

2. *They are mutable.*

3. *They are ſnares and baites unto us.*

First, in regard they doe not yeeld that which we expect they ſhould yeeld: there is a falſhood in the things, they promiſe this and that in ſhewes, but when we poſſeſſe them, they yeeld it not; as they have no ſtrength in deed, ſo they deceive. Then alſo, *There is a mutability in them*; for there is nothing in the world but changes, there is a vanity of corruption in them; all things at laſt come to an end, ſave God, who is unchangeable. Then againe beſides the intrinſecall vanity in all outward things, and whatſoever carnall reaſon leades unto, *They are ſnares and baites unto us, to draw us away from God*, by reaſon of the vanity of our nature, vainer then the things themſelves: therefore take heed of confidence in any thing, or elſe this will be the iſſue, wee ſhall bee worſe then the things we truſt, *Vanity of vanities, all things are*

Eccleſ. 1. 1.

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Pſal. 62.9. *vanity*, and man himſelfe is lighter then vanity ſaith the Pſalmiſt, hee that truſts to vanity is worſe then vanity, a man cannot *ſtare non ſtante*, ſtand on a thing that cannot ſtand it ſelfe; a man cannot ſtand on a thing that is mutable and changeable, if he doth, hee is vaine with the thing. Even as a picture drawne upon ice, as the ice diſſolves, ſo the picture vaniſheth away. So it is with all confidence in the creature whatſoever, it is like a picture upon ice, which vaniſheth with the things themſelves. He that ſtands upon a ſlippery thing ſlips with the thing hee ſtands on. If there were no Word of God againſt it, yet this much may be ſufficient out of the Principles of Reaſon to ſhew the folly of truſting to *Aſſhur* and *Horſes* and the like.

Let this be the end of all then touching this carnall confidence, to beware that we doe not faſten our affections too much upon any earthly thing, at home, or abroad; within or without our ſelves: for, *God will deſtroy the wiſedome of*

1 Cor. 1.19. *the wiſe*; let us take heed therefore of all falſe confidence whatſoever. Let us uſe all outward helpes, yet ſo as to relie upon God for his bleſſing in the uſe of all. And when they all faile;

2 Chron. 20.12 be of *Iehoſhaphats* minde, *Lord, wee know not what to doe*, the creature failes us, our helpes faile us, *but our eyes are upon thee*. So when all outward *Aſſhurs* and *Horſes* and helpes faile, deſpaire not; for the leſſe helpe there is in the creature, the more there is in God. As *Gideon*

Iudg. 7.2. with his Army, when hee thought to carrie it away

away with multitude: God told him there were too many of them to get the victory by, leaſt Iſrael ſhould vaunt themſelves of their number: and ſo leſſened the armie to three hundred. So it is not the meanes, but the bleſſing on the meanes which helpes us. If we be never ſo low, diſpaire not; let us make God ours, who is All-ſufficient and Almighty, and then if wee were brought a hundred times lower then wee are, God will helpe and raiſe us. Thoſe who labour not to have God the Lord of Hoſts to goe out with their Armies, if they had all the *Aſhurs* & *Horſes* in the world all were in vaine. It was therfore a good reſolution of *Moſes*, ſaith he to God, *If thy preſence go not with us, carrie us not hence*, he would not goe one ſtep forward without God: ſo if we cannot make God our friend to goe out before us, in vaine it is to go one ſtep forward. Let us therefore double our care in holy duties, renewing our Covenant with God before the decree come out againſt us: the more religious, the more ſecure we ſhall be. If we had all the creatures in the world to help us, what are they but vanity and nothing, if God bee our enemy. Theſe things we know well enough for notion, but let us labour to bring them home for uſe in theſe dangerous times abroad. Let us begin where we ſhould, that our worke may bee eſpecially in heaven. Let us reforme our lives, being moderately carefull, as Chriſtians ſhould without tempting Gods providence, uſing rightly all civill ſupports and

Exod. 33. 15.

helpes ſeaſonably and to the beſt advantage: for (as was ſaid) the careleſneſſe herein for defence, may proove as dangerous and fatall to a ſtate, as the too much confidence and truſt in them.

The end of the third Sermon.

THE

THE FOVRTH SERMON.

Hos. 14.3.

Asshur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the works of our hands, ye are our gods, for in thee the Fatherlesse findeth mercy.

WE shewed you heretofore at large, how the Spirit of God by the Prophet, doth here dictate a forme of turning unto these *Israelites*, *Take unto you wordes*, and then teach them what they should returne backe againe: Thanks, *So will we*

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wee render the Calves of our lips, wherein they ſhew two things. 1. That they have no great matters to render, *Oxen or Sheepe*, &c. 2. They ſhew what is moſt pleaſing unto God, *The Calves of our lips*; that is, thankeſgiving from a broken heart, which (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeakes) pleaſeth God better then *a bullocke that hath hornes and hooſes*. But this is not enough, the Holy Ghoſt therefore doth preſcribe them together with Prayer and Thankeſgiving, Reformation, *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, we will not ride upon Horſes, neither will we ſay any more to the workes of our hands, ye are our gods, for in thee the fatherleſſe findeth mercy*. So that here you have *Reformation* joyned with *Prayer* and *Praiſe*. Whence wee obſerved divers things, That without Reformation our Prayers are abhominable: That in Repentance there muſt be Reformation of our ſpeciall ſinne, which here they doe, Take this one thing more in the third place, which ſhall be added to the former.

Obſerv.

In Reformation, we muſt goe not onely to the outward delinqueneies, but to the ſpring of them, which is ſome breach of the firſt Table.

The Roote of all ſin whence.

The roote of all ſinne is the deficiency of obedience to ſome command of the firſt Table, when confidence is not pitched aright in God, or when it is miſapplyed, and miſfaſtened to the creature: when the ſoule ſets up ſomewhat for a ſtay and prop unto it, which it ſhould not doe, this is a ſpirituall and a ſubtle ſinne, and muſt be repented of, as here, *Aſhur ſhall not*

ſave

ſave us, &c. It were good therefore for all thoſe who ſeriouſly intend the worke of Repentance to take this courſe. If the groſſe fault be of the *ſecond Table*; take occaſion of ſorrow and mourning thence; but when you have begunne there, reſolve and bring all to the breeding ſinne of all, which is, the faſtning of the ſoule falſly: when it is not well faſtened and bottomed in the root. And therefore it was well done by *Luther*, who in a Catechiſme of his brings in the Firſt Commandement into all the Commandements of the firſt and ſecond Table. *Thou ſhalt have no other gods but me*, Therefore thou ſhalt ſanctifie the *Sabbath*; Honour thy *Father* and *Mother*, ſhalt not take *my Name in vaine*: ſhalt not *Commit Adultery*, ſhalt not *ſteale*, &c. Becauſe he that hath no god but that God in his heart, will be ſure to ſanctifie the *Sabbath*; Honour his *Father* and *Mother*, not *Commit Adultery*, nor *ſteale*. And whence come all the breaches of the Second Table? Hence, that there is not the true feare and love of God in our hearts, and it is juſt with God for their ſpirituall ſinnes, to give them up to carnall and groſſe ſinnes. Therefore, though the Iſraelites here, had many groſſe ſinnes to repent of, yet they goe to the ſpring head, the breeding ſinne of all, *falſe Confidence*; this is to deale throughly, to goe to the core. *Aſſhur ſhall not ſave us, wee will not ride upon Horſes*. From whence in the third place, they deſcend to the next branch of their ſinne, *Idolatry*.

Neither

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Neither will we ſay any more to the workes of our hands, ye are our gods.

All falſe confidence hath two objects, for it is alwaies either

1. *Out of Religion*, or
2. *In Religion.*

For the firſt, all *ill confidence and truſt* if it be *out of Religion*, it is in the *Creature*, either

1. *Out of us*, or
2. *In our ſelves.*

Secondly, if it be *in Religion*, it is in a falſe god, as here, *neither will wee ſay any more to the workes of our hands, ye are our gods.* Obſerve hence in the firſt place,

Obſerv. *Man naturally is prone to Idolatry.*

That men are naturally prone to Idolatry.

The ſtory of the Bible and of all Ages ſheweth how prone men are to Idolatry and will-worſhip, and what miſeries enſued thereupon. Amongſt other inſtances, wee ſee how preſently after that breach in the Kingdome of *David* and *Salomon*, by *Ieroboams* ſetting up of two *Calves*, how ſuddenly they fell to Idolatry, ſo that after that there was not one good King amongſt them all, untill the nation was deſtroyed. And ſo in the ſtory of their Antiquities, ſee how prone they were to Idolatry in the wilderneſſe; *Moſes* doth but goe up to the Mount, and they fall to Idolatrie; cauſe *Aaron* to make a Calfe, and dance round about it. The thing is ſo palpable, that it need not be ſtood upon, That mans nature is prone to Idolatry, which will not raiſe up it ſelfe to God, but fetch

God

God to it ſelfe, and conceive of him according to its falſe imaginations.

Now Idolatry is two waies committed in the falſe hollow and deceitfull heart of man: either

1. *By attributing to the creature that which is proper to God onely; inveſting it with Gods Properties*, or

2. *By worſhipping the true God in a falſe manner.*

So that in the firſt place, Idolatry is to inveſt the creature with Gods properties. Goe to the higheſt creature, Chriſts Humane nature; wee have ſome bitter ſpirits (Lutherans they call them) Proteſtants; who attribute to the humane nature of Chriſt, that which onely is proper to God, to be every where, and therefore to be in the Sacrament. You have ſome come neere them, both in their opinion and in their bitterneſſe. They will have a *neſcio quomodo*, Chriſt is there though they know not how; but this is to make Chriſts humane nature a god; to make an Idoll of it. So prayers to Saints and Angels, this makes Idols of them, becauſe it inveſts them with properties to know our hearts, which hee muſt know unto whom wee pray. And then, it gives unto them that which is proper to God, Worſhip, and Prayer. But, we muſt call upon none, but whom we muſt beleeve in, and we muſt beleeve in none but God. Therefore, worſhipping of Saints or Angels is Idolatry.

What Idolatry is.

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Secondly, Idolatry is to worſhip the true God in a falſe manner, to fixe his preſence to that we ſhould not fixe it to, to annexe it to ſtatues, Images, Crucifixes, the picture of the Virgin *Mary* and the like. Not to run into the common place of Idolatry, but to come home unto our ſelves. Whether are the Papiſts Idolaters or not, like unto theſe Iſraelites, who ſay (being converted) *neither will we ſay unto the workes of our hands, ye are our gods?*

Queſt.

Anſw.

I anſwer, yes, as groſſe as ever the *Heathens* were, and worſe. The very *Ægyptians*, they worſhipped none for gods, but thoſe who were alive, as a *Papiſt* himſelfe ſaith, (though hee were an honeſt Papiſt) The *Ægyptians* worſhipped living creatures, but we are worſe then they, for we worſhip ſtocks and ſtones, and a peece of bread in the Sacrament. And to this purpoſe, one of their Jeſuites confeſſeth this, and yeeldeth the queſtion for granted; That if there be not a Tranſubſtantiation of the bread turned into the body and blood of Chriſt, wee are worſe Idolaters then theſe, and theſe nations: becauſe we worſhip a peece of bread, which is a dead thing. But we aſſume (according to the Scriptures, The Judgement of our Church, of Antiquity, and of the Truth it ſelfe) the bread is not Tranſubſtantiated, at leaſt it is a doubtfull matter; for if it be not the intention of the Prieſt it is not: ſee here, upon what hazard they put the ſoules of people.

Object.

But they have many ſhifts for themſelves, as among

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among the reſt this is one, that they doe not worſhip the image, but God or Chriſt before the Image.

Anſw. Popiſh ſhifts for worſhipping of Images anſwered.

To which the anſwer is, That the Fathers who wrote againſt the Heathens meet with this pretence, The Pagans had this excuſe, we worſhip not this ſtatue of *Iupiter*, but *Iupiter* himſelfe. Thus they have no Allegation for themſelves, but the Heathen had the ſame, which the Ancient Fathers confuted. They are guilty of Idolatry in both the forenamed kindes: For firſt, They worſhip things that they ſhould not, as appeares by their Invocation of Saints, vows to them, their Temples, Altars and the like full of their Images, giving them honour due unto God. And then They worſhip the true God in a falſe manner before their Images, there is no kinde of Idolatry but they are groſſely guilty of it. Whereof let this be the Uſe.

Vſe. I. First of all, of *Thankefullneſſe*, that God hath brought us into *Goſhen*, into a Kingdome of light, that we are borne in a time and place of knowledge of the true God, wherein is the true worſhip of the true God. It is a matter that wee cannot be too thankfull to God for.

Queſt. How ſhall wee ſhew our ſelves thankfull?

Anſw. In keeping faſt the true worſhip of God we have, and keeping out Idolatry; in reviving lawes in that kinde, if not making new. What if there were liberty given for men to goe about the countrie to poyſon people, would wee endure ſuch perſons, and not lay hold upon them; ſo in

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in that wee are freed from Jeſuites who goe about to poyſon the ſoules of Gods people, let us ſhew our thankefullneſſe for this, and ſhun Idolatry of all ſorts whatſoever.

2. Secondly, ſee from hence, that there can bee no tolleration of that Religion, no more (as was ſaid) then to ſuffer and tollerate poyſoners, as they ſaid of *Colloquintida* in their pottage: ſo, 2 King. 4.40. *there is death in the pot of Romiſh Religion.* Therfore it were good to compell them to come in and ſerve the Lord their God: as it is ſaid, good 2 Chron. 34.33 *Ioſiah* compelled thoſe in his time to ſerve the Lord; ſo it were good ſuch courſes were taken to reforme and reclaime them. As Saint *Auguſtine* ſaid of himſelfe in his time, being a *Donatiſt*; hee altered his judgement by force; in which caſe, it would be with them as with children, who when they are young, muſt be forced to ſchoole; but afterwards, they thanke them who forced them. So it is in Religion, though it cannot be forced, yet ſuch might afterwards bleſſe God for them who brought them to the meanes, who inſteed of their blindneſſe trained them up in more knowledge, by forcing them to uſe the meanes; for which (when God ſhould open their eyes) they might bleſſe God another day. But this point of groſſe Idolatry (ſo (largely handled in bookes) is onely touched by the way, that wee may hate Idolatry the more: which could not be left out, the words leading to ſay ſomewhat of it, ſeeing how theſe Converts heere hate it, and out of that hatred

hatred make this profeſſion: *neither will we ſay any more to the workes of our hands, ye are our gods*, &c.

But this is not all, wee muſt know that there be other Idols then the Idols which wee make with our hands: beſides theſe Religious Idols, there be Secular Idols in the world, ſuch as men ſet up to themſelves in their own hearts. Whatſoever takes up the heart moſt, which they attribute more to then to God, that is their Idoll, their god. A mans *love*, a mans *feare* is his god. If a man feare greatneſſe rather then God, that he had rather diſpleaſe God then any great perſon, they are his Idols for the time. *The feare of man brings a ſnare*, ſaith the Wiſeman, and thoſe who to get the favour of any in place, ſacrifice therefore their Credit, Profeſſion, Religion and ſoules; it is groſſe Idolatry, dangerous to the partie, and dangerous to themſelves. It was the ruine of *Herod* to have that applauſe given him, and taken by him, *The voice of God and not of man*. So for any to bee blowen up with flatterers that lift them up above their due meaſure, it is an exceeding wrong to them, prejudiceth their comfort, and will proove ill in the concluſion, indeed treaſon againſt their ſoules.

Pro. 29. 25.

Act. 12. 22.

So there is a baſer ſort of Idolaters, who ſacrifice their credit and ſtate, whatſoever is good within them, their whole powers, to their baſe and filthy pleaſures. Thus man is degenerate ſince his fall, that he makes that his god, which is meaner then himſelfe. Man that was ordained

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for everlasting happinesse and Communion with God is now brought to place his happinesse and contentment in base pleasures. Whereas it is with the soule of man for *good* or *ill*, as it applies it selfe to that which is greater or meaner then it selfe. If it apply it selfe to confidence and affiance in God, then it is better, for it is the happinesse of the soule to have Communion with the spring of goodnesse, as *David* speakes, *It is good for me to draw neere to God*, &c. when we suffer the soule to cleave in affiance to earthly things, it growes in some measure to the nature of the things adhered to: when wee love the world and earthly things wee are earthly. Till the Spirit of God touch the soule (as the loadstone doth the heavie iron drawing it up as it were) it will cleave to the creature, to baser things then it selfe, and so makes the creature an Idoll, which is the common Idolatry of these times. Some make *Favour*, as the ambitious person: some their *Pleasures*, as baser persons of meaner condition: and some *Riches*, every man as their temper, and as their temptations are.

Psal. 73. 28.

Now it is not enough to be found in Religion one way in the maine, but we must bee found every way, without any touch of Idolatry. In a speciall manner, the Apostle calls the *Covetous man* an *Idolater*, because he makes his riches his Castle, thinking to carrie any thing with his wealth, but his riches oftentimes proove his ruine, for whatsoever a man loves more then God,

Ephes. 5. 5.

God, God will make it his bane and ruine: at leaſt be ſure to take it away, if God meane to ſave the party: Therefore, heere they ſay; *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, we will not ride on Horſes, neither will we ſay any more to the worke of our hands, ye are our gods.*

For in thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy.

Here he ſhewes the Reaſon of their rejecting of all falſe confidence in *Aſhur*, in *Horſes*, in *Idols*: becauſe they had planted their confidence in the true God. They ſaid ſo when they had ſmarted by *Aſhur*, and by *Idolatry*: then *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us*, &c. They knew it by Rule before, but till God plagued them, as he did oft by *Aſhur* and by *Ægypt*, when hee broke the reed that it did not onely not uphold them, but run into their hands, they made no ſuch acknowledgement; hence obſerve;

Obſerv.

Vſually it is thus with man, hee never Repents till ſinne be imbittered to him.

That ſinnes bitterneſſe cauſeth Repentance.

He never alters his confidence, till his truſts be taken away; when God overthrowes the mold of his deviſes, or brings them upon his owne head, ſetting him to reape the fruit of his owne waies; imbittering ſinneſull courſes to him, then hee returnes. Inſtruction without correction doth for the moſt part little good. When *Aſhur* had dealt falſely with them, and Idolatry would doe them no good, then they begin to alter their judgement. What makes men after too much confidence in their wit, when they have by their plots and deviſes gone

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beyond what they ſhould doe, and wrapped and intangled themſelves in a net of their owne weaving (as we ſay) alter their judgement? They are then become ſick of their owne devices, this makes the change. For till then, the braine hath a kinde of net to wrap our devices in. So many have nets in their braines, wherewith they intangle themſelves and others with their idle devices: which when they have done, and ſo woven the webb of their owne miſery; then they begin to ſay, as the Heathen ſaith, when he was deceived. O foole am I, I was never a wiſe man. Then they begin to ſay, I was a foole to truſt ſuch and ſuch. I have tried ſuch and ſuch policies and they have deceived me, I will now alter my courſe. And furely, men of great parts are ſeldome converted, till God confound their plots, and laies flat all their falſe confidence. When *Aſſur* diſappoints them, then *Aſſur ſhall not ſave us*, &c.

Vſe. Therefore make this Uſe of it, not to bee diſcouraged when God doth confound any carnall plot or policie of ours, as to thinke that God hates either a Nation or a Perſon, when they have ill ſucceſſe in plots and projects which are not good. Nay, it is a ſigne rather that God intends good; if they make a right uſe of it. God intends Converſion, to tranſlate falſe confidence from the creature to himſelfe, and to learne us to make God wiſe for us. It is a happie thing when in this world God will diſappoint a mans courſes and counſells, and bring

him

him to ſhame, rather then he ſhould goe on and thrive in an evill and carnall courſe, and ſo to end his daies. There is no evidence at all which can be given of a Reprobate, becauſe there may be finall Repentance, Repentance at the laſt. But this is one, and as fearefull a ſigne as may be, to thrive and goe on in an evill courſe to the end. When God ſhall diſappoint and bring a man to ſhame in that he prided in, and built upon, It is a good ſigne; if thereupon we take advantage to turne to God, and lay a better bottome and foundation, as we ſee here, *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, wee will not ride upon Horſes*, &c.

For in thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy.

As if he ſhould ſay, wee have that ſupply of ſtrength and comfort from thee, that *Aſhur, Horſes and Idols* cannot give: Therefore wee will alter our confidence, to fixe and pitch it upon thee, and truſt thee, becauſe, *In thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy*. We ſhall not need to ſay, *in thee will we truſt*; for, if God be apprehended thus, as one, in whom *the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy*, affiance will follow. For, the object is the attractive and load-ſtone of the ſoule, ſo that if a fit object be preſented unto it, Affiance, Confidence and Truſt, will of it ſelfe follow. Therefore the Spirit of God forbeares multiplication of words, and ſets downe this: *For in thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy*: and doth not ſay, *in thee will wee truſt*, for that is implied; whoſoever conceives that God is ſo gracious

ous and mercifull to despicable miserable persons: such as are set downe, in this one particular, *Fatherlesse:* they cannot but trust in God, therefore, the one is put for the other: *For in thee the Fatherlesse findeth mercy.* Whence, from the dependance of the words observe,

Observ. *That it is not sufficient to disclaime affiance in the creature, but wee must pitch that affiance aright upon God.*

We must not onely take it off where it should not be placed, but set it where it should be. *Cease from evill, and learne to doe well.* Trust not in the creature. *Cease from man* (as the Prophet saith) *whose breath is in his Nostrills; Commit thy waies to God, trust in him.* The Heathen by the light of nature knew this, that for the *Negative*, there is no trusting in the creature, which is a vaine thing, they could speake wonderfull wittily and to purpose of these things, especially the *Stoicks*. They could see the vanity of the creature: but for the *Positive* part, where to place their confidence, that they were ignorant in. And so, for the other part here; *Neither will wee say any more to the workes of our hands yee are our gods.* Idolaters can see the vanity of false gods well enough. In *Italy* you have thousands of the wittier and learneder sort who see the folly and madnesse of their Religion. And among our selves, how many witty men can disclaime against Popery, who yet in their lives and conversations are not the better for it: because they thinke it enough to see the error that misleades them,

Isa. 1. 16, 17. Isa. 2. 22. Psal. 37. 5.

It is much easier to see the vanity of the creature, then to know where to pitch our confidence.

them, though they never pitch their confidence as they ſhould doe. It is not enough therefore to reſt in the *Negative* part. A Negative Chriſtian is no Chriſtian, not to be an Idolater, not to be a Papiſt, no there muſt be ſomewhat elſe, we muſt bring forth good fruit, or elſe wee are for the fire, and are neere to curſing and burning. This is ſpoken the rather, becauſe many thinke themſelves well, when they can diſclaime againſt the errors of Popery, and that they are good Chriſtians, becauſe they can argue well. O, ſuch make Religion nothing but a matter of opinion, of canvaſing an argument, *&c.* But, it is another manner of matter: *A divine Power exerciſed upon the ſoule, whereby it is transformed into the obedience of divine truth, and molded into it.* So that there muſt be a *Poſitive*, as well as a *Negative* Religion, a cleaving to God, as well as a forſaking of Idols.

Mat. 3 10.
Heb. 6. 8.
Religion what.

Againe, in the ſevering of theſe Idols from God, we muſt know and obſerve hence,

That there is no Communion betweene God and Idols.

Obſerv.

Neither will wee ſay any more to the workes of our hands, ye are our gods; for in thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy. There muſt be a renouncing of falſe worſhip, Religion, and confidence, before we can truſt in God. *Ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon*, ſaith Chriſt. We cannot ſerve Chriſt and Antichriſt together, wee may as well bring North and South, Eaſt and Weſt together, and mingle light and darkeneſſe, as mixe two oppo-

Mat 6. 24.

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ſite Religions. You ſee here, one of them is diſclaimed, ere affiance be placed in the other. Therfore the halters betwixt two Religions are heere condemned. It was excellent well ſaid by *Ioſhua*. They had there ſome mixture of falſe worſhip, and thought therewith to ſerve alſo *Iehovah*: no (ſaith he) *you cannot ſerve Iehovah*. What is *Ioſhuahs* meaning, when he ſaith they could not? not onely that they had no power of themſelves; but you are a naughty falſe people, you thinke to jumble Gods worſhip, and that of Heathens together: *you cannot ſerve God* thus. So a man may ſay to thoſe who looke *Rome*-wards for worldly ends, and yet will be Proteſtants, *you cannot ſerve God*, you cannot bee ſound Chriſtians, halting thus betwixt both. Theſe are not compatible, they cannot ſtand together; you muſt diſclaime the one, if you will cleave to the other, we ſee the ground heere: *Neither will wee ſay any more to the workes of our hands, ye are our gods; for, in thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy.*

Ioſh. 24. 19.

Againe, whereas upon diſclaiming of falſe confidence in the creatures and Idols, they name this as a ground, *For in thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy*; obſerve,

Obſerv.

In what meaſure and degree wee apprehend God aright to bee the All-ſufficient true God, in that meaſure wee caſt away all falſe confidence whatſoever.

The right apprehending of God ſhakes off all falſe truſt.

The more or leſſe we conceive of God as we ſhould doe, ſo the more or leſſe wee diſclaime con-

confidence in the creature. Thoſe who in their affections of joy, love, affiance and delight, are taken up too much with the creature (ſay what they will) profeſſe to all the world by their practiſe, that they know not God. By the contrary, thoſe who know and apprehend him in his greatneſſe and goodneſſe, as hee ſhould bee apprehended, in that proportion they withdraw their affections from the creature and all things elſe. It is with the ſoule in this caſe, as with a ballance, if the one skale bee drawne downe by a waight put in it, the other is lifted up. So where God weighs downe in the ſoule, all other things are light, and where other things prevaile, there God is ſet light. *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us*; for hee can doe us no good: nor *Horſes*, becauſe they are vaine helps. How attained they to this light eſteeme of *Aſhur* and *Horſes? For in thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy*. That which is taken from the creature they find in God. And this is the Reaſon why the world ſo maligne good and ſound Chriſtians, they thinke, when God gets, that they looſe a feather (as wee ſay) ſome of their ſtrength: ſurely ſo it is; for when a Chriſtian turnes to God and becomes ſound, he comes to have a meane eſteeme of that which formerly was great in his ſight; his judgement is otherwiſe, as we ſee here, *Aſhur*, *Horſes*, *Idols*, and all they eſteeme nothing of them. *Horſes* and the like are good, uſefull and neceſſary to ſerve Gods providence in the uſe of meanes, not to truſt

Simile.

Why the world hates Chriſtians eſcaped from them.

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truſt in or make coordinate with God. In the world eſpecially great perſons would be gods in the hearts of people; therefore, when they ſee any make conſcience of their waies; they thinke they looſe them; becauſe now they will doe nothing but what may ſtand with the favour of God. Thus farre from the *Connexion*. Now to the words themſelves.

For in thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy.

Wherein we have ſet forth unto us for our conſideration of Gods rich goodneſſe towards poore miſerable ſinners.

1. *The Attribute of God, Mercy.*
2. *The fit Object thereof, The Fatherleſſe.*

Mercy is that ſweet Attribute that makes us partake of all the reſt.

Mercy is Gods ſweeteſt Attribute, which ſweetneth all his other Attributes; for but for Mercy, whatſoever elſe is in God, were matter of terror to us. His Juſtice would affright us: His Holineſſe likewiſe (conſidering our impurity) would drive us from him: *Depart from mee* (ſaith *Peter* to our Saviour) *for I am a ſinnefull man*; and when the Prophet *Iſay* ſaw God in his excellencie a little: *Then he ſaid, woe is me, for I am undone, becauſe I am a man of uncleane lips*, &c. His Power is terrible, it would confound us, His Majeſty aſtoniſh us. O, but Mercy mitigates all, he that is great in Majeſty is abounding in mercy; he that hath beames of Majeſty hath bowels of mercy. O, this draweth, eſpecially miſerable perſons, *In thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy*. And now, in the *Covenant of Grace*, this *mercy* ſets all a worke.

Luke 5.8.

Iſa.6 5.

For

For it is the *mercy* of God by which wee triumph now in the Covenant of Grace, in that *mercy* which ſtirr'd up his wiſedome to finde out a way for *mercy* by ſatisfying his *Iuſtice*: So that the firſt mooving Attribute of God that ſet him a worke about that great worke of our ſalvation, by Jeſus Chriſt, in the Covenant of Grace, was *mercy*, his tender *mercy*, his bowels of *mercy*: Therefore of all others, that Attribute is here named; *For in thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy.*

Mercy in God ſuppoſeth miſery in the creature, either preſent or poſſible: for there is 1. A Preventing and 2. A reſcuing mercy.

A *Preventing mercy*, whereby the creature is freed from poſſible miſery, that it might fall into, as it is his mercy that we are not ſuch ſinners in that degree as others are; and every man that hath underſtanding is beholding to God for their Preventing, as well as for their Reſcuing mercy. We thinke God is mercifull onely to thoſe unto whom hee forgives great ſins: O, he is mercifull to thee that ſtandeth, thou mighteſt have fallen fowly elſe. Mercy ſuppoſeth miſery either that wee are in or may fall into. So that mercy in God may admit of a threefold conſideration.

1. It ſuppoſeth *Sinne*; ſo there is a *Pardoning mercy* for that. Or

2. *Miſery*, that is, a *Delivering mercy*. Or

3. *Defect or want in the Creature*, which is, *Supplying mercy*.

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Wherſoever *mercy* is converſant, it is uſually about one of theſe three, either *Sinne*, or *Miſery*, or *Defects and wants*, that is, to Perſons in miſery: for indeed the word is more generall then *Fatherleſſe*; Deſerted perſons, that are forſaken of others, and have no ſtrength of their owne, they are heere meant by the *Fatherleſſe*. Who have no meanes, wiſedome, power or ability of their owne, but are deſerted and forſaken of others, whence the chiefe truth that offers it ſelfe to be conſidered of us is this,

Obſerv. *That God is eſpecially mercifull to thoſe Perſons who ſtand moſt in need of mercy.*

Why God is ſo ready to ſhew mercy to the Fatherleſſe?

Firſt, becauſe *theſe doe reliſh mercy moſt*, and give him the glory of it, applying themſelves moſt to his *mercy*, being beaten out of the creature: and the more we have communion with God being driven out of the creature and other comforts, the more he diſcovers himſelfe to us: as the neerer we are to the fire, the hotter it is, ſo the neerer wee are to God, the more good and gratious hee every way ſhewes himſelfe unto us. Now what makes us neere him, but extremity of miſery, whereby we are beaten from all other holds whatſoever. It is acknowledged to be his worke, when hee doth it for theſe that are deſerted of all others, then he hath the chiefe glory of it. This is one end why God ſuffers his children to fall into extreamity of great ſorrowes and perplexities, to fall very low in depths of miſeries (as the Scripture ſpeakes) that hee might diſcover a depth of his

Hoſ 5. 15.

Pſal. 131. 1.

mercy,

mercy, beyond the depth of their misery, to shew that there is a depth deeper then that depth, for their misery is finite, O but the bowels of his compassions are infinite both in measure and time: *His mercy endureth for ever.* Psal 136.

Againe, *God is jealous of their affiance and confidence*, knowing that naturally, unlesse we fall into some straites and weaning extremities, we shall place our affiance upon the creature; therefore he deales thus with us. He knowes our sickenesse well enough, that we are desperatly addicted to present things, therefore to cure this sickenesse in us, he drawes us by extremities from the creature to himselfe, which when it failes we goe to him. *Helpe Lord*, why? *for vaine is the helpe of man*, it is time then to helpe. *Helpe Lord, for the godly are perished from the earth.* It is time to helpe Lord, for if thou doe not, none will, whereby they come to have their confidence upon the rocke, which is worth all. Other men they run from creature to creature, from helpe to helpe, as sicke bodies doe, to this and to that drug, and to this and that potion, they seeke to many things to beg comfort from; but a Christian hath a sure foundation that he may stay upon, *In thee the fatherlesse findeth mercy.* Psal. 60. 11. Psal. 12. 1.

To come now to speake of the words as they lie in the whole, they carry another instruction;

That God is very gratious and mercifull to fatherlesse and distressed persons. Observ.

As we have it, *Psal.* 10. 18. *That God will judge*

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judge the fatherlesse and the oppressed, that the man of the earth may no more oppresse. So *Psal.* 146.9. It is said, *The Lord preserveth the strangers, hee releeveth the fatherlesse and widdow*, &c. And for the generall we have it, *The Lord releeveth all that fall, and raiseth up all that be bowed downe.* God he opens his eare to heare their crie, to judge the fatherlesse and the oppressed, the like we have in *Exodus*. *Also thou shalt not oppresse a stranger*, for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing yee were strangers in the land of *Egypt*, and *Exod.* 22.23. saith he, *Thou shalt not afflict any widdow or fatherlesse childe; if thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely heare their crie.* These among many, are direct places to shew the truth of this, that God is mercifull, not only in generall, but to those persons set downe by a *Synechdoche*; a figure where one is set downe for all of the same kinde. God is mercifull to all persons, in any kind of misery or distresse whatsoever, as the Apostle speakes, God is he *who comforteth the abject person*; the forlorne, the castaway persons of the world, and he is *a very present helpe in trouble*. So as when there are none to helpe, then he awaketh and rouseth up himselfe to lay hold for us, *His owne arme brings salvation for his owne sake.* So when there is misery and none to helpe, God will finde cause and ground from his owne bowells to shew mercy, to take pitty and compassion upon his poore Church and Children, which should teach us.

Pſal. 145.14.

Exod. 23.9.

2 Cor. 7.6.
Pſal. 46.1.
Iſa. 41.17.
Iſa. 59.16.
Iſa. 63.5.
Iſa. 48.9.

First

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Vſe. 1.

Firſt of all, *To take notice of this moſt excellent Attribute of God*, and to make uſe of it upon all occaſions, at our moſt need; then to preſent to our ſoules God thus deſcribed and ſet out by his owne Spirit, to be *Hee that comforteth the Abject*, and ſheweth mercy to the fatherleſſe and oppreſſed: this we ſhould make uſe of for the Church in generall, and for every one of our ſelves in particular. The Church hath beene a long time like a forlorne widdow as it were; God hath promiſed that he will have a care of the widdow and the fatherleſſe, and ſo he will of his poore Church. We ſee in the parable, the widdow with her importunitie prevailed with an unrighteous Judge: the Church now being like a widdow, what is wanting but a ſpirit of ſupplication and Prayer, which ſpirit if the Church had to wraſtle with God and lay hold upon him as *Iaakob* did, and not ſuffer God to reſt till he had mercy on his poore Church? Certainely it would be better with it then it is, for God comforteth the widdow, if one, what will he doe for the whole Spouſe which hath ſo long beene a deſpecable and forlorne widdow. And for the time to come, It ought to miniſter matter of comfort for the Church, certainely, God that is mercifull to the *Fatherleſſe*, he will be mercifull to the poore Church. We ſee in the *Revelation*, though the woeman was perſecuted by the Dragon, yet there were given two wings of a great Eagle to her that ſhe might flie unto the wilderneſſe,

Luk 18. 5.

Hoſ. 12. 4.
Iſa. 62. 7.

Rev. 12. 14.

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wildernesse, where she had a place provided of God. It alludes to the story of the *Israelites* when they came out of *Egypt*, God provided for them in the wildernesse, they had *Manna* from Heaven, and water out of the rocke, and till they came to *Canaan*, God provided every way for them in a marvellous manner. So God will be sure to provide for his in the wildernesse of this world, he will have a harbour still for the Church, and a hiding place from the stormy tempests of her adversaries. Therefore let us not despaire, but stirre up a spirit of Prayer for the Church: that he who shewes mercy to the *fatherlesse*, and commands mercy to be shewed to the widdow; that he would shew that himselfe, which he requires of us. And why may not we hope and trust for it? The Church in this world is as it were *a fatherlesse person*, a *Pupill*, an *Orphan*, a *Sheepe* in the midst of *wolves*, as *Daniell* in the lyons den, as a *ship* tossed in the waves, as a *lillie* among thornes, it is invironed with enemies, and of it selfe, (like the poore sheepe) is shiftlesse. What is the Church but a company of weake persons? not so witty for the world as worldly wise men are, nor so strong in the arme of flesh, nor so defenced: but a company of persons who have a hidden dependance upon God, we know not how, and hang as it were by a threed: as the Church in this land, and abroad in other places. The true Church is maintained we know not how: God keepes up Religion, the Church and all, because he

Isa. 4. 5, 6.

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he is mercifull to the Fatherleſſe, who have no ſhifting wits as the worldly *Achitophels* have. God is wiſe for them that are not wiſe for themſelves, and powerfull for them, that have little ſtrength of their owne. Therefore, let us not be diſcouraged though we be weake creatures, a little flock, like a company of ſheepe, yet notwithſtanding we have a ſtrong Sheapheard. Pſal. 23. 1. The Church is like a vine, a poore deſpicable withered, crooked, weake plant, which windes about, and muſt be ſupported or elſe it ſinkes to the ground, yet it is a fruitfull plant. So the the Church of God, a number of weake Chriſtians profeſſing Religion, they want many helps, yet God ſupports them, and hath ordained this and that haven for them: as this Magiſtrate, and that Perſon, God hath one ſupport or other for them. While they are fruitfull and true Vines, God will have a care of them, though they bee never ſo weake and deſpiſed in the eye of the world. Iſa. 54. 11.

Againe, this ſhould teach us, *to make God our All-ſufficiency in all eſtates whatſoever*, and not to goe one haires breadth from a good conſcience for feare of afterclaps. I may be caſt into priſon, I may looſe my goods. What of all this? is not God All-ſufficient? and is not he eſpecially ſeene in comforting of thoſe who ſtand in moſt need of comfort, who want other helpes? and will he be indebted to any man who ſtands out in a good quarrell for his cauſe? will he not give needfull ſupply, if not in this world, Iſa. 41. 17.

Vſe. 2.

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yet in a better of all comforts whatſoever? It is a good ſupplie, when the loſſe is in outward things, and the ſupply in inward peace, grace and ſtrength; it is a happy loſſe that is loſt to the advantage. There was never any man yet from the beginning of the world, who loſt by cleaving to Religion and good cauſes, God ever made it up one way or other. Therefore this is a ground of courage, to caſt our ſelves upon doing good when God offers the occaſion, relying upon God as *Heſter* did; *If I periſh I periſh*, ſhe meant, *If I periſh, I ſhall not periſh*; ſuch have a better condition in the love and favour of God then they had before, or ſhould have had, if they had not periſhed. It is the way not to periſh, ſo to periſh: it is as cleare and true as the Sun-ſhine: but we want faith to beleeve it.

Iſa. 60. 17.

Iſa. 64. 5.

Eſt. 4. 16.

Vſe. 3. And then againe, let us make uſe of it in another kinde, to reſiſt another temptation, what will become of my poore children, if I doe thus and thus, ſtand thus and thus, and goe on in my innocency? what will become of thy children? it was well ſpoken by *Lactantius*, *Becauſe God would have men ſtand out and die in a good cauſe willingly; therefore hee hath promiſed in a ſpeciall manner to bee a Father to the Fatherleſſe, and a Husband to the Widow.* Are we the chiefe Fathers of our children? No, we are but under God to bring thoſe who are his children into the world, we are but inſtruments, God is the chiefe Father, beſt and laſt Father, *The Everlaſting Father*; who takes upon

Iſa. 9. 6.

Sect. IIII.

on him to be a Father to the Fatherleſſe, whom hee chargeth all not to hurt. Experience ſhewes, how hee bleſſeth the poſterity of the righteous, who have ſtood in defence of the truth. Therefore, let us make no pretences either for baſeneſſe, dejection of ſpirit, or covetouſneſſe to keepe us from well-doing, for God will reward all.

Queſt. O ſay ſome, I could be content not to bee ſo worldly, but it is for my children.

Anſw. What ſaith the Apoſtle, *Let thoſe who are married be as if they were not married*, meaning in regard of this ſcraping of wealth together by unlawfull meanes of covetouſneſſe, or in regard of readineſſe to doe workes of mercy. What doth God appoint one Ordinance of marriage to take a man of all good duties? No, notwithſtanding this we muſt doe fitting workes of mercy; God will be the Father of the Fatherleſſe. Many uſe oppreſſion, and goe to Hell themſelves, to make their children rich. Who commands us to make our children in ſhew a while happy here, to make our ſoules and bodies miſerable for ever. There is a moderate care (as the Apoſtle ſpeakes) ſo that *hee who cares not for his owne is worſe then an infidell*; but we muſt not make this pretence to excuſe injurious and extortive courſes: But let God alone; he will doe all things well, truſt him. Or, if any thing ſhould befall us otherwiſe then well; what if it doe? God is the God of the Fatherleſſe, whatſoever he takes away hee

1 Cor. 7. 29.

1 Tim. 4 8.

Ser. IIII.

ſupplies it better another way. For whence have the creatures that infuſion to helpe? Is it not from God? and when the creature is taken away, is not God where he was?

Vſe.4. And let us alſo learne hence; that we anſwer Gods dealing in ſhewing mercy to the Fatherleſſe and ſuch as ſtand in need, as the Apoſtle exhorts, *Put on therefore, as the Elect of God (holy and Beloved) bowells of mercies,* &c. as if hee ſhould ſay, as you would proove your ſelves to be Elect, members of Chriſt and children of God, ſo ſhew your likeneſſe in this particular, *The bowels of mercy and compaſſion.* This hath ever beene, and yet is at all times a character of Gods children, and ſhall be to the end of the world. It is a ſig[illegible] ſuch a one hath found bowels of mercy, that is ready upon all occaſions to powre forth thoſe bowels of compaſſion upon others: as hard-heartedneſſe this way ſhewes a diſpoſition which yet hath not rightly taſted of mercy. As we ſay in another caſe, thoſe that are appeaſed in their conſciences, in the ſenſe of the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, they are peaceable to others, becauſe they feele peace. So here, thoſe that feele mercy, will bee mercifull; thoſe that have felt love, will be loving to others. *A good man is mercifull to his beaſt, but the mercies of the wicked are cruell.* Thoſe therefore that are hard-hearted and unmercifull, hardening themſelves againſt the complaints of the miſerable: there is (for the preſent) no comfort for them, that the Spirit of

Coloſſ.3.12.

Pro.12.10.

God

God hath wrought any change in their hearts, for then it would ſtampe the image of God upon them, they would be mercifull to the fatherleſſe, widow, and diſtreſſed perſons. What ſhall wee thinke then of a generation of men, who by griping uſury and the like courſes have made many widowes miſerable? Let ſuch profeſſe what they will, whileſt they are thus hard-hearted, they have not the bowels of Chriſt. God is ſo mercifull, that you ſee (as the Jewes call them) hee hath hedges of the commandements, that is, he hath ſome remote commands which are not of the maine, and all to hedge from cruelty: as, *Thou ſhalt not kill the Dam upon the neſt. Thou ſhalt not ſeeth a kid in his mothers milke.* Exod. 23. 19. What tends this too? nothing but to ſhew the mercy and bowels of God, and that hee would have us to abſtaine from cruelty. He that would not have us *Murther*; would have us keepe aloofe of, and not be mercileſſe to the very dumbe creatures, birds and beaſts: therefore, let us labour to expreſſe the image of our heavenly Father in this.

Againe, we ſhould uſe this as a plea againſt dejectednesſe at the houre of death, in regard of thoſe we leave behind us; not to bee troubled what ſhall become of them, when wee are to yeeld up our ſoules to God: but know that hee hath undertaken to be, *the Father of the Fatherleſſe and of the Widow.* Therefore, for ſhame, for ſhame, learne as to live, ſo to die by faith: and as to die by faith in other things, ſo to die in this *Vſe. 5.*

Ser. IIII.

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faith, that God as he will receive thy ſoule, ſo he will receive the care of thy poſterity. Canſt thou with affiance yeeld up thy ſoule unto God, and wilt thou not with the ſame confidence yeeld thy poſterity. Thou art an Hypocrite if this diſtract and vexe thee, when yet thou pretendeſt to die in the faith of Chriſt. Canſt thou yeeld thy ſoule, and yet art grieved for thy poſterity? no, leave it to God: he is All-ſufficient, *The earth is the Lords, and the fullneſſe thereof.* We need not feare to put our portion in his hands, he is rich enough, *The earth and all is his.* Therefore, when we are in any extreamitie whatſoever, relie on this mercy of ſo rich and powerfull a God, improove it, for it is our portion, eſpecially in a diſtreſſed condition. Were it not for Faith wrought by the bleſſed Spirit of God, he would looſe the glory of this Attribute of *mercy.* Now Faith is a wiſe power of the ſoule, that ſees in God what is fit for it, ſingling out in God what is fit for the preſent occaſion of diſtreſſe. Is a man in any extremity of miſery, let him looke to mercy. Is a man oppreſſed, let him looke to mercy to be revenged of his enemies: is a man in any perplexity, let him looke to mercy, joyned with wiſedome, which is able to deliver him. Religion is nothing elſe but an application of the ſoule to God: and a fetching out of him ſomewhat (as he hath diſcovered himſelfe in the Covenant) fit for all our exigents; as there is ſomewhat in God, and in the Promiſes, for all eſtates

Pſal. 24. 1.

of

Ser. IIII.

of the ſoule. Faith therefore is wittie to looke to that in God which is fit for its turne. Let us therefore take heed of Satans policie herein: who in our extreamity uſeth this as a weapon to ſhake our Faith. *Tuſh* (as it is in the Pſalme) *God hath forſaken and forgotten him.* Hath he ſo? nay, becauſe I am in extremity and deſerted above others, rather God now regards me more then before, becauſe, *hee ſcourgeth every ſonne whom he receiveth.* So retort Satans fierie darts backe againe. For indeed that is the time wherin God exalts and ſhewes himſelfe moſt glorious and triumphant in *mercy*, where miſery is greateſt. *Where ſinne abounds, there grace abounds much more*, ſo where miſery abounds, mercy ſuperabounds much more. Therefore let us be as wiſe for our ſoules, as Satan can be malicious againſt them, what hee uſeth for a weapon to wound the ſoule, uſe the ſame as a weapon againſt him.

Satans policie in our extremity, how to retort it.

Heb. 12. 6.

Rom. 5. 20.

To end all, *let Faith in Gods mercy anſwer this his deſcription*; and let it be a deſcription ingrafted into us at ſuch a time. Doth God care for the fatherleſſe, & meane perſons who are caſt down & afflicted? why then, I will truſt that God who doth ſo, being in this caſe my ſelf. If he wil help in *Extremitie*, truſt him in *Extremitie*: If hee will helpe in *diſtreſſe*, truſt him in *diſtreſſe*: if he will helpe when all *forſake*, truſt him when we are *forſaken* of all. What if a ſtreame bee taken away? yet none can take away God from thee: what if a beame be taken away? thou haſt

Habak. 3. 17.

SER. IIII.

haſt the Sun it ſelfe: what if a particular comfort be taken away, ſo long as God, *who comforteth the abject*, and is *merciſull* to the *diſtreſſed, Fatherleſſe* and *Widowes*, continues with thee, thou needs not feare. A man cannot want comfort and mercy, ſo long as the *Father of mercies* is in covenant with him. If he *ſinne*, he hath *Pardoning mercy* for him; if *weake*, he hath *Strengthening mercy*; if in *darkneſſe*, he hath *Quickning mercy*; if we be *dull, dead*, and in *danger*, there is *Reſcuing mercy*, and if *ſubject to dangers wee may fall in*, there is for that, *Preventing mercy*. Therefore there is *mercy* ready to compaſſe Gods children about in all conditions, when they are invironed with dangers, yet God is neerer to guard their ſoules, then the danger is to hurt them.

Pſal. 32. 10.

Therefore let us take the counſell of the bleſſed Apoſtle, *Be carefull for nothing, but in every thing by Prayer and ſupplication, with thankeſgilet your requeſts be knowne to God*: and what then, will God grant that I pray for? perhaps hee will not. But yet, *The Peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding, ſhall guard your hearts and mindes through Chriſt Ieſus*. As if he ſhould ſay, in nothing be overcarefull, let your care bee when ye have uſed the meanes, to depend upon God for ſupport in the event and iſſue of all. If God denie you what you pray for, he will grant you that which is better: he will ſet up an excellent inward peace there, whereby he will ſtabliſh the ſoule in aſſurance of his love, pardon

Phil. 4. 6, 7.

of

of ſinnes and reconciliation: whereby their ſoules ſhall be guarded, and their hearts and mindes preſerved in Chriſt: ſo they become impregnable in all miſeries whatſoever, when they have *the Peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding* to guard them within. Therefore, let us not betray and looſe our comforts, for want of making uſe of them; or for feare ſome ſhould call us Hypocrites: and on the other ſide, let us not flatter our ſelves in an evill courſe: but make the conſcience good, which will beare us out in all miſeries, dangers, and difficulties whatſoever. Nothing makes loſſes, croſſes, baniſhment, impriſonment, and death ſo terrible and out of meaſure dreadfull unto us, but the inward guilt and ſting in the inſide, the tumults of conſcience. Cleere this well once, make all whole within, let conſcience be right and ſtraight; let it have its juſt uſe and meaſure of truth and uprightneſſe; and goe thy way in peace, I warrant thee, thou ſhalt hold up thy head, and winde thy ſelfe out of all dangers well enough: nothing ſhall daunt or appale thy courage: for ſaith *Salomon, The Righteous is bold as a Lyon*; what can, what ſhould he feare, who is heire of all things, whoſe all things are, and who is reconciled to God in Chriſt, having all the Angels and Creatures for his ſervants: for whoſe ſake, all things muſt needs work together for good.

Gen 42.21.

Pro.28.1.

Revel.21.7.

Heb.1.14.

Rom.8.28.

The end of the fourth Sermon.

THE FIFTH SERMON.

Hos. 14. 4.

I will heale their backesliding, I will love them freely, for mine Anger is turned away from him.

THE superabounding mercies and marvellous loving kindnesses of a gratious and loving God to wretched and miserable sinners (as we have heard) is the substance and summe of this short sweet Chapter; wherein their ignorance is taught, their bashfullnesse is incouraged, their deadnesse is quickned, their untowardnesse is par-

pardoned, their wounds are cured, all their objections and petitions anſwered: ſo as a large and open paſſage is made unto them and all other miſerable penitent ſinners for acceſſe unto the throne of grace. If they want words, they are taught what to ſay; if diſcouraged for ſinnes paſt, they are incouraged that ſinne may be taken away; yea all iniquity may be taken away; *Take away all iniquity*; if their unworthineſſe hinder them, they are taught for this, That God is gratious: *Receive us gratiouſly*; if their bypaſt unthankfullneſſe be any barre of hinderance unto them; they are taught to promiſe thankfullneſſe: *So will wee render the Calves of our lips*. And that their Repentance may appeare to be ſound and unfained, they are brought in, making profeſſion of their deteſtation of their boſome ſins of falſe confidence and Idolatry: *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, wee will not ride upon Horſes: neither will we ſay any more to the workes of our hands, ye are our gods.* And not onely doe they reject their falſe confidence: to ceaſe from evill, but they doe good, and pitch their affiance where it ſhould be: For, *in thee the Fatherleſſe findeth mercy*.

None muſt therefore be diſcouraged or run away from God, for what they have beene; for there may be a returning, God may have a time for them, who in his wiſe diſpenſation doth bring his children to diſtreſſe, that their delivery may be ſo much the more admired by themſelves and others, to his glory and their good.

good. He knowes us better then we our ſelves, how prone we are to leane upon the creature, therefore he is faine to take from us all our props and ſupports; whereupon we are forced to relie upon him. If we could doe this of our ſelves, it were an excellent worke and an undoubted evidence of the child of God, that hath a weaned ſoule in the midſt of outward ſupports, to injoy them, as if he poſſeſſed them not, not to be puft up with preſent greatneſſe, not to ſwell with riches, nor be high minded: to conſider of things to be as they are, weake things, (ſubordinate to God) which can help no further, then as he bleſſeth them. But to come to the wordes now read.

I will heale their backeſliding and love them freely, &c.

After that the Church had ſhewed her Repentance and truth of returning to God: now in theſe words and the other verſes unto the end of the chapter, (ſaving the laſt verſe, which is a kind of acclamation iſſuing from all the reſt of the foregoing verſes, *Who is wiſe and he ſhall underſtand theſe things*, &c.) is ſet downe an anſwer unto that prayer, Repentance and reformation which the Church made, all the branches of which their former ſuit, the Lord doth punctually anſwer. For, they had formerly prayed, *Take away all iniquity, and receive us gratiouſly, doe good unto us*: unto which he anſwers here,

I will heale their backeſliding, &c.

Which

SER. V.

Which is thus much, I will pardon their iniquities, I will accept graciously of them, I will love them freely, and so of the rest, as will appeare afterwards, and in summe, God answers all those desires which formerly he had stirred up in his people. Whence ere we come to the particulars, observe in generall.

Observ. *Where God doth give a spirit of prayer hee will answer.*

It needs no proofe, the point is so cleere and experimentall, all the saints can say this much from their experience of Gods gratious dealing with them: and the Scriptures are full of such instances and promises, which we all know. To name a place or two for all the rest. *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me.* Psal. 50. 15. So in another place, *And it shall come to passe that before they call I will answer, and whilst they speake I will heare.* Isa. 65. 24. It hath beene made good to *Persons*, as *Daniel*, *Elias*, *Salomon*, *Iaakob* and others, and it hath beene, and is made good unto all ages of the Church from time to time, and shall be unto the end of the world. And therefore the Prophet sets downe this as a conclusion undeniable from the premises, *O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come,* Psal. 65. 2. whence he drawes this excellent consolation. *Iniquities prevaile against mee; as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away.*

Reason. The Reason is strong, because they are the motions of his owne Spirit which he stirs up in us.

us. For, hee dictates this Prayer unto them: *Take with you words,* &c. *and ſay unto the Lord, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly.* So that, where God ſtirs up holy deſires by his Spirit, hee will anſwer exactly, there ſhall not a ſigh be loſt. *Likewiſe* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *the Spirit alſo helpes our infirmities: for we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought, but the Spirit it ſelfe makes interceſſion for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered.* Therefore there cannot a groane be loſt, nor a darting of a ſigh, whatſoever is ſpirituall muſt bee effectuall, though it cannot be vented in words. For God hath an eare not onely neere a mans tongue to know what he ſaith, but alſo in a mans heart, to know what he deſires, or would have. As the obſerving carefull tender mother many times knowes what the child would have though it cannot ſpeake: ſo God he knowes the deſires, ſighs, and groanes of the heart when we cannot ſpeake. For, ſometimes there may be ſuch a confuſion upon the ſoule, by reaſon of divers diſturbances, that it cannot expreſſe nor vent it ſelfe in wordes, therefore the Spirit vents it ſelfe then in ſighs and groanes which are heard and accepted: becauſe they are the deſires of his owne Spirit. This much the Prophet *David* excellently ſheweth. *Lord thou haſt heard the deſire of the humble, thou wilt prepare their heart, thou wilt cauſe thine eare to heare.* God he firſt prepares the heart to pray, then his eare to heare their prayers and deſires. If this will not

Rom. 8. 26.

That God hath an eare in mans heart.

Pſal. 10. 17.

SER. V.

A ſtrong motive to draw us before God in Prayer.

not incourage us to be much in ſuit to God, and put up our petitions to him, to labour for a ſpirit of prayer; I know not what will prevaile: when we know that no petition ſhall be turned backe againe unanſwered. When we are to deale with Princes upon earth, they oftentimes regard neither the perſons nor their petitions, but turne their backes upon both. O! but a Chriſtian hath the eare of God and Heaven open unto him: ſuch credit in Heaven, that his deſires and groanes are reſpected and heard. And undoubtedly a man may know that he ſhall be heard, when he hath a ſpirit of prayer, in one kind or other, though not in the particulars, or kindes we aske; heare he will for our good. God will not looſe the incenſe of his owne Spirit, of a ſpirit of prayer which he ſtirs up, it is ſo precious: Therefore let us labour to have a ſpirit of prayer, which God regards ſo much: Seeing for a certaine, whereſoever he gives a ſpirit of prayer, he meanes to give that we pray for, but according to his heavenly wiſedome, as here his anſwer is,

I will heale their Backeſliding, I will love them freely, &c.

God anſwers them exactly unto all they praid for, beginning firſt with the ground of all our comfort, *forgiveneſſe of ſinnes*, According to their petition, *Take away all iniquity*: hee anſwers, *I will heale their backeſliding*, or their rebellion. *Backeſliding* is an aggravation of ſin: every ſinne is not a rebellion, Apoſtaſie, or backeſliding

backſliding, for their be alſo ſinnes of infirmities, we uſually rancke ſinnes thus, in

1. *Sinnes of Ignorance.*
2. *Sinnes of Infirmitie.*
3. *Sinnes againſt knowledge, with a higher hand.* And
4. *The Sinnes againſt the Holy Ghoſt.*

Now this is more then to cure ſinnes of *Ignorance*, and of *Infirmitie*, when he ſaith, *I will heale their backeſliding.*

Queſt. But why doth he anſwer the higher pitch of an aggravation, when their petition was in a lower ſtraine onely, (*Take away all iniquity.*)

Anſw. To ſhew, that he would anſwer them fully, that is, that he would heale all ſinnes whatſoever: not onely of Ignorance, and of Infirmity; but alſo ſinnes willingly committed, their rebellions and backeſlidings. For indeed they were backeſliding; from the time of *Ieroboam*, that made the rent, the ten tribes grew worſe and worſe continually, ſo that they had beene utterly extinguiſhed; but that God was wondrous gratious to ſend them Prophets, to preſerve many that they ſhould not bow the knee to *Baall*; being mercifull to them, to beare with their backeſliding ſo long: for beſides their calves, they had falſe gods, they did not onely worſhip the true God in a falſe manner by the calves, but they had Baals alſo. So that we ſee God when he will comfort, will comfort to purpoſe, and take away all objections that the ſoule can make; a guilty ſoule being full of

SER. V.

A ſtrong motive to draw us before God in Prayer.

not incourage us to be much in ſuit to God, and put up our petitions to him, to labour for a ſpirit of prayer; I know not what will prevaile: when we know that no petition ſhall be turned backe againe unanſwered. When we are to deale with Princes upon earth, they oftentimes regard neither the perſons nor their petitions, but turne their backes upon both. O! but a Chriſtian hath the eare of God and Heaven open unto him: ſuch credit in Heaven, that his deſires and groanes are reſpected and heard. And undoubtedly a man may know that he ſhall be heard, when he hath a ſpirit of prayer, in one kind or other, though not in the particulars, or kindes we aske; heare he will for our good. God will not looſe the incenſe of his owne Spirit, of a ſpirit of prayer which he ſtirs up, it is ſo precious: Therefore let us labour to have a ſpirit of prayer, which God regards ſo much: Seeing for a certaine, whereſoever he gives a ſpirit of prayer, he meanes to give that we pray for, but according to his heavenly wiſedome, as here his anſwer is,

I will heale their Backeſliding, I will love them freely, &c.

God anſwers them exactly unto all they praid for, beginning firſt with the ground of all our comfort, *forgiveneſſe of ſinnes*, According to their petition, *Take away all iniquity*: hee anſwers, *I will heale their backeſliding*, or their rebellion. *Backeſliding* is an aggravation of ſin: every ſinne is not a rebellion, Apoſtaſie, or backeſliding

backſliding, for their be alſo ſinnes of infirmities, we uſually rancke ſinnes thus, in

1. *Sinnes of Ignorance.*
2. *Sinnes of Infirmitie.*
3. *Sinnes againſt knowledge, with a higher hand.* And
4. *The Sinnes againſt the Holy Ghoſt.*

Now this is more then to cure ſinnes of *Ignorance*, and of *Infirmitie*, when he ſaith, *I will heale their backeſliding.*

Queſt. But why doth he anſwer the higher pitch of an aggravation, when their petition was in a lower ſtraine onely, (*Take away all iniquity.*)

Anſw. To ſhew, that he would anſwer them fully, that is, that he would heale all ſinnes whatſoever: not onely of Ignorance, and of Infirmity; but alſo ſinnes willingly committed, their rebellions and backeſlidings. For indeed they were backeſliding; from the time of *Ieroboam*, that made the rent, the ten tribes grew worſe and worſe continually, ſo that they had beene utterly extinguiſhed; but that God was wondrous gratious to ſend them Prophets, to preſerve many that they ſhould not bow the knee to *Baall*; being mercifull to them, to beare with their backeſliding ſo long: for beſides their calves, they had falſe gods, they did not onely worſhip the true God in a falſe manner by the calves, but they had Baals alſo. So that we ſee God when he will comfort, will comfort to purpoſe, and take away all objections that the ſoule can make; a guilty ſoule being full of

objections; Oh my ſinnes are many, great, rebellions, and Apoſtacies: But, be they what they will, Gods mercy in Chriſt is greater and more. *I will heale their backeſliding*, or their rebellion, God is above conſcience, let Sathan terrifie the conſcience as he will, and let conſcience ſpeake the worſt it can againſt it ſelfe, yet God is greater. Therfore let the ſinne be what it will, God will pardon all manner of ſinnes; as they pray to pardon all, ſo he will *take away all iniquity, heale their backeſliding*, but to come neerer the words.

I will heale, &c.

The healing meant here, is eſpecially in the pardon of their ſinnes, anſwerable to their deſires in juſtification. And there is a healing alſo in ſanctification by the Spirit: when God takes away the venome from the wound, then God cures in ſanctification; both are meant; but eſpecially the firſt. In a wound we know there is,

1. *The malignity and venome of it*, and then,
2. *The wound it ſelfe ſo feſtered and rankled.*

Now pardoning grace in juſtification, takes away the anguiſh and malice of the wound, ſo that it ceaſeth to be ſo malignant and deadly as to kill, or infect. And then ſanctification purgeth and cleanſeth the wound, and heales it up. Now God through Chriſt doth both. The blood of Chriſt doth heale the guilt of ſinne, which is the anger and malignity of it. And by the Spirit of Chriſt he heales the wound it ſelfe, and purgeth out the ſicke and peccant humor

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humor by little and little through sanctification: God is a perfect healer, *I will heale their backesliding.* See here the state of the Church and Children of God, they are prone to backesliding and turning away: we are naturally prone to decline further and further from God. So the Church of God planted in a family in the beginning of the world, how soone was it prone to backesliding, this is one weakenesse since the fall, it is incident to our nature to be unsetled and unsteady in our holy resolutions. And whilst we live in the midst of temptations, the world, together with the fickleneſſe of our own nature, evill examples, and Sathans perpetuall malice against God and the poore Church, are ill Pilots to lead us out of the way. This is spoken to make us carefull how to shunne *Backesliding*, for we see how many opinions are foisted in amongst us, and have got some head, that durst not before once be named amongst us. Popery spreads it selfe amaine; even Churches are prone to backsliding. Therefore S. *Paules* advice is, *Bee not high minded, but feare, for if God spared not the naturall branches, take heed least he also spare not thee.* What is become of *Rome*, so the same will become of us, if wee stop not our backeslidings.

That the state of the Church and Gods children is prone to backsliding.

Rom. 11. 20. 21

Now in that Gods promise is, *I will heale their backeslidings*, observe in the first place.

That sinne is a wound, and a disease.

Now as in sickneſſe there is, 1. Griefe troubling and vexing the partie who feeles it: and

Observ. *That sinne is a wound & disease.*

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2. Deformitie of the place affected, which comes by wounds and weakeneſſes. So in all ſinne (when wee are ſenſible of it) there is firſt griefe, vexation, and torment of conſcience: and then againe, deformitie; for it takes away the beauty and vigour of the ſoule, and dejects the countenance, it debaſeth a man, and takes away his excellencie, as *Iacob* ſaith of *Reuben*, *Vnſtable as water, thou ſhalt not excell, becauſe thou wenteſt up to thy fathers bed.* Saith God to *Cain, why art thou wrath, and why is thy countenance fallen?* and the Prophet *David* hee confeſſeth: *when I kept ſilence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.* So againe, *There is no ſoundneſſe in my fleſh, becauſe of thine anger, neither is there any reſt in my bones, becauſe of my ſinne.* Sothat ſinne is a wound and a diſeaſe, whether wee conſider the miſeries it brings on ſoule and body or both. Therefore howſoever a ſinfull perſon thinke himſelfe a goodly perſon, and weare his ſins as ornaments about him, Pride, Luſt and the like; yet hee is a deformed loathſome perſon in the eyes and preſence of God; and when conſcience is awakened, ſinne will bee loathſome, irkſome, and odious unto himſelfe, fill him full of griefe and ſhame, ſo that hee cannot endure the ſight of his owne ſoule.

Gen. 49. 4.

Gen. 4. 6.

Pſal. 32. 3, 4.

Pſal. 38. 3.

That all ſinnes are diſeaſes.

Now all ſinnes whatſoever are diſeaſes: The firſt ſinne of all ſinnes, which wee call hereditarie Originall ſinne, what is it but an hereditarie diſeaſe? a leproſie which we drew from

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from our firſt Parents, ſpread over all the ſoule, having the ſeeds and ſpawne of all ſinne in it. The Church of *Rome* makes it leſſe then other ſinnes, as indeed Popery is ignorant both of the height of grace, and of the depth of corruption; for, if they knew the one, they would bee more capable of the other. Why doe they not conceive aright of grace, and of the height of it? becauſe they know not the depth of Originall ſinne. And indeed the true knowledge of this diſeaſe is proper onely to the child of God in the true Church: none but he knowes what Originall ſinne is, others can diſpute and talke of it, but none feeles it but the child of God. Now all other particular actuall ſinnes, be diſeaſes flowing from hence: ſo that all diſeaſes in this kinde, ariſe either 1. *from our ſelves, as wee have a ſeminarie of them in our owne hearts:* or elſe, 2. *from the infection and contagion of others:* or 3. from *Satan*, who hath ſociety with our ſpirits (as men have with the outward man) comming in by his ſuggeſtions and our intertaining of them: ſo that in that reſpect, ſin is like unto a *wound* and a *diſeaſe*, in regard of the cauſe of them.

1. *Sinne like a diſeaſe in regard of the cauſe.*

And, *in regard of the effects, ſinne is like a diſeaſe.* Diſeaſes if they be neglected, breed death it ſelfe, and become incurable; ſo it is with the diſeaſes and ſinnes of the ſoule, neglect them, and the beſt end of them will bee, deſpaire in this world, whereupon wee may have advantage to flie unto the mercy of God

2. *Sinne is like a diſeaſe in regard of the effects it breeds*

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in Chriſt. This is the end of ſinne, either to end in a good deſpaire, or in a fruitleſſe barren deſpaire at the houre of death leading to Hell, when they have no grace to repent. *The wages of ſinne is death*, &c. Sinne it ſelfe is a wound, and that which riſeth from ſinne, is a wound too, doubting and deſpaire: for this diſeaſe and wound of ſinne, breeds that other diſeaſe, a deſpaire of mercy, which is the beginning of Hell, the ſecond death. Theſe things might be further inlarged, but for the preſent onely in generall, know, That ſinne is *a diſeaſe and a wound of the ſoule*, ſo much worſe then the diſeaſes of the body, by how much the ſoule is more pretious then it, and the death of the ſoule more terrible then the death of the body. *Sinne is a diſeaſe and a wound*: for, what is Pride but a ſwelling? what is Anger, but an intemperate heate of the ſoule like an Ague as it were? what is Revenge, but a wild-fire in the ſoule? what is Luſt, but a ſpreading Canker in the ſoule, tending to a conſumption? what is Covetouſneſſe, but as a ſword, a perpetuall wounder of the ſoule, piercing it through with many ſorrowes? what is Security, but as it were the Lethargie and Apoplexie of the ſoule? and ſo wee might goe on in other reſemblances.

Rom. 6. 23.

Queſt. But it may be demanded, how ſhall we know that we are ſicke of this ſickneſſe and diſeaſe you ſpeake of?

Anſw. How doe wee know that we are ſicke in body?

dy? If the body be extreame cold, we know there is a diſtemper, or if it be extreame hot: ſo if the ſoule be ſo extreame cold, that no heavenly Motives or ſweet Promiſes can worke upon it, ſtirre it up, then certainely there is a diſeaſe upon the ſoule.

If the ſoule be inflamed with Revenge and Anger, that ſoule is certainely diſeaſed: the temper of the ſoule is according to the paſſions thereof, a man may know by his *Paſsions*, when he hath a ſick ſoule.

If a man cannot reliſh good diet, then wee count him a ſick man, ſo when a man cannot relliſh holy diſcourſe, nor the Ordinances of God. You have ſome men, that can relliſh nothing but profits and pleaſures, and ſuch vanities, but no divine thing, ſuch have ſicke ſoules undoubtedly.

So againe, a man may know there is a deadly ſickneſſe and ſoreneſſe upon the ſoule, 1 when it is ſenſeleſſe of its wounds, and 2 is ſenſeleſſe of that which paſſeth from it: as men (we ſay) are readie to die, when excrementall things paſſe from them without any ſenſe. So a man may know that he is deſperately ſoule-ſicke, when oathes, lies, and deceitfull ſpeeches paſſe from him, and yet he is ſenſeleſſe of them, they think not of them, they meane no harme: doth that argue a ſound ſtate of body, when a man is ſo deſperately ill, that he feeles not his bodily hurts, and is this a good ſtate of ſoule, when theſe filthy things come out from it inſenſibly?

it is an argument of extreame deadneſſe of ſpirit, and irreverence, and of a deſperate ſinne ſick ſoule, when there is no dread or awe of the Majeſty of God; let ſuch looke about them: it is an aggravation of the danger of the ſoule, this kind of temper. We uſually ſay, when the ſtomacke is ſo weake that it can hold no nouriſhment without caſting it up againe as faſt as it receives it; certainely ſuch a one is ſick and in a dangerous ſtate of body. So when a man heares and heares, and reads and reads, and digeſts nothing into nouriſhment, but all is left where he heard it; it is a ſigne that they have ſicke ſoules, when their retentive power is ſo weake. And there is certainely ſome ſickneſſe, ſome dangerous obſtruction in that ſoule, that cannot digeſt the wholeſome Word of God to make uſe of it; ſome noyſome luſt then certainely obſtructs the ſoule which muſt be purged out.

It is a pittifull thing to ſee the deſperate condition of many now, who though they live under the tyrannie of ſinne, yet flatter their owne diſeaſe, and account them their greateſt enemies, who any way oppoſe their ſicke humour. What doe they moſt cordially hate? The ſound preaching of the Word; the very ſight of ſuch a one, whoſe calling hath beene to put us in minde of our ſinnes, evill courſes, and vanities of the world, is loathſome and offenſive to carnall men, in whom corruption is growne up to ſuch a tyrannie, that it ſwayes the

whole

whole ſoule to deviſe how to ſatisfie it. Man is ſo diſeaſed, that thoſe luſts in him (which he ſhould labour to ſubdue and mortifie by the power of the Spirit) doe ſo over-ſway him, that all his life is nothing elſe, but *a diſeaſe and backſliding* into ſinne. And as if we were not corrupt enough our ſelves, how many are there who feed their corruptions, when they frequent ill places and company, whom they cannot bee without, and are as fiſh in the water, feeding the old man in them. So that ſuch are not onely ſick, but defend, maintaine, and feed their ſickneſſe, their whole life being ſpent this way: which they laugh at, and make *Pride their chaine and ornament*, as the Prophet ſpeakes. This is ſpoken that we may take up a lamentation for the vilenеſſe of mans nature, and to teach us how to judge aright of men, when they deviſe how to have their liberty ſtrengthened to goe to Hell (as it were) with an high hand: having their will ſo fortified that no man is able to deale with them, thwart them, or teach them any thing. If it were offered to moſt men to have what eſtate they would in this world: what are their wiſhes and deſires? O, that I might live as I liſt, that I might have what would content my pleaſures, without controule, that I might have no croſſes, but goe ſmoothly on: yet this which is the deſire of moſt men, is the moſt curſed eſtate of all, and moſt to be lamented. Thus it appeareth, *Sinne is a wound and a diſeaſe*: what Uſe may we make of it?

If

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Vſe. 1.

If this be ſo, then in the firſt place, let us know and conſider, That no man who lives in ſinnes unrepented of and uncured is to be envied, be they never ſo great. Who will envie a man that hath a rotten body, covered over with glorious attire: when every man knowes that he carries a rotten diſeaſe about him? either ſome diſeaſe in the vitall parts, or from the rottenneſſe of ſin, which puts a kind of ſhame and ſcorne. Can we pittie a man thus in glorious attire having a filthy body under it, thus covering their nakedneſſe, in whoſe caſe we would not for any thing be: and are they not much more to be pittied who have ulcerous ſoules, galled and pierced through with many ſinnes? when we ſee men that are blaſphemers, ſwearers, men guiltie of much blood and filthineſſe, and of many ſinnes hanging upon them, to envie ſuch a mans greatneſſe, is extreame folly. O, he carries his deaths wound about him (as we ſay) he is ſtriken already in his ſide with a deadly dart; without the healing mercy of God, there is but a ſtep betwixt him and eternall death; wherefore no man is to be envied for his ſinfull greatneſſe.

Vſe. 2.

Againe, if this be ſo, that ſinne is a diſeaſe and wound of the ſoule, let us therefore labour to cure it preſently. It is deſperate folly in men to neglect their bodies, when they know that they are prone to ſuch and ſuch diſeaſes which are growing upon them every day: how carefull are men (perceiving this much) to prevent diſeaſes

ſeaſes by timely phyſick? all ſinnes are diſeaſes, and growing like diſeaſes run from ill to worſe and worſe. *Wicked men* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *grow worſe and worſe.* Therefore, if ſin be a diſeaſe, prevent it preſently; for as we ſee, Hereticks and others the like are hardly found, but at the firſt: and then are hardly cured: ſo, if we neglect the diſeaſes of our ſoules, they will breed a conſumption of grace, or ſuch an ill temper of ſoule, as that it cannot well deſire to repent. Nay when a man lives in wicked rebellious courſes long, God will give him up to ſuch terrors of conſcience, that it will not be pacified, but upbraid it ſelfe, I have beene a ſinnefull wretched creature, mercy hath beene offered me againe and againe, but now it is too late, having outſtood all the meanes of grace, and rejected them. When they have conſidered that their lives have for a long time beene a meere rebellion, and that they have put off the checks of conſcience, the admonitions of the Word and Spirit, with the motions thereof: it is long in this caſe before a man can have peace; for anſwerable to the continuance in ſinne, is the hardneſſe of the cure, if it be cured at all.

1 Tim. 3. 13.

Therefore there is no dallying with ſinne, I ſhall repent at length, but not now; yet a while I will continue theſe and theſe courſes, I ſhall doe well enough, *&c.* as if a man who were ſicke or deſperately wounded, ſhould ſay, I ſhall doe well, and yet neglect to ſend for the Phyſitian. None are ſo deſperately fooliſh in caſe of

That there is no dallying with ſin, to delay repentance.

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of the body, why ſhould wee for our ſoules? is not that in much more hazard then the body, if we had ſpirituall eyes to conſider of it? The truth is, people are not convinced of this; that ſin is ſuch a ſickneſſe, which is the reaſon they are ſo careleſſe of it. But when the conſcience is awaked, as it will bee one day, heere or in Hell; then they will be of another minde. Nay, in this world, when friends, nor riches, nor any thing can comfort: then they cry out, O that they had not beene ſo fooliſh, they would give a world (if they had it) for peace of conſcience, this will be the beſt of it, for men that goe on in ſinne. Therefore, before hardneſſe of heart grow upon us (that diſeaſe following the diſeaſe of ſinne) let us take heed, and labour to have our ſoules healed in time. Thus wee have found, *That ſinne is a ſickneſſe:* for ſo much is implied, when he ſaith: *I will heale their backſliding.* Whence the direct Obſervation is,

That want of conviction of the ſinfullneſſe of ſinne, makes us ſo ſinneful and careleſſe

Obſerv. *That God is the great Phyſitian of the Soule.*

For he ſaith here, *I will heale their backſliding*, ſo that *healing* implies, the taking away of

1. *The Guilt of ſinne*, which is the *venome* of it: by *Juſtification*

2. *The Rage of ſinne*, which is the *ſpreading* of it; by *Sanctification.*

3. *The Removing the judgement upon our eſtate.*

For (unleſſe God bee the more merciſull) theſe things follow, where there is ſinne, and breaking of his law, there is a ſtate binding over

to

to damnation and guilt: when there is a sinnefull disposition raging, and bringing us from one degree of sinne to another, then there is Gods judgement and wrath revealed from Heaven against this. Now when God heales, he heales perfectly, but in some regards slowly, as wee shall see hereafter. In regard of *Forgivenesse of sinnes*, he healeth perfectly; but by little and little, in regard of the other of Sanctification, he stops up the issues of our corruption by little and little. For other things, and judgements in this world, he remooves the malice, and takes away the sting of them, which is the venome; as he saith afterwards, *For mine Anger is turned away*, which being remooved and turned from things, then they are no more judgements. What cared *Paul* for imprisonment, when hee knew Gods wrath accompanied not the stocks? let wrath be taken from the suffering; that the soule be sound, then it is no matter what condition a man be in, he carries Heaven and Paradice with him. Therefore, so farre God remooves those diseases and sicknesses of condition, as they carrie venome in them: so changing the condition, that whatsoever we suffer, it hath the nature of an exercise, medicine, or correction onely. But that which invenomes all, and makes the least crosse a curse, and sinkes deepe, is the anger of God joyned with things. The least crosse when it carrieth with it the anger and vengeance of God, and reports that to the soule; I have offended God, and it is just with

Acts 16.

Psal 89.46.

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with him thus to inflict wrath upon me: this is terrible, and it puts a ſting to the croſſe. Now God here promiſeth to remoove that, *I will heale their backſliding*; This principally in the firſt place is meant of healing in regard of *Iuſtification*; taking away that guilt from the ſoule, which inthralls it, and binds it over to condemnation and judgement. God will ſet the ſoule at a ſpirituall liberty and ſo heale it. Thus you ſee the point cleere, *That God is the great Phyſitian of the ſoule.*

Reaſon 1.

For, God who made the ſoule, knowes all the diſeaſes, windings and turnings of it; he is an excellent Anatomiſt, *all things are naked and open before his eyes*, he knowes the inward part of the ſoule, the ſeate of all ſinne. We know not our ſelves as he knowes us; there is a miſtery of ſelfe-deceit in the heart which he knowes, who can ſearch all the hidden corners of the heart; which is the Reaſon why he is ſo good a Phyſitian and ſo excellent, becauſe he is a diſcerner and ſearcher of the heart, who can ſee all, and ſo can cure all, being above the ſting of conſcience, he hath a remedy above the malidy, he is greater then our conſcience, therefore hee can cure our conſcience.

Heb 4.13.

Reaſon 2.

And in the next place, *as hee can heale our ſoules, ſo hee is willing to doe it*: which his willingneſſe we may know by the medicine he doth it by, his owne deare Sonne; hee hath provided a plaiſter of his Sonnes blood to heale us. And beſides his owne inward willingneſſe, being

being now a gratious Father to us in Chriſt Jeſus; he ſends his Ambaſſadors to heale and cure us in his Name, to apply his medicines, and to beſeech and intreate us to be reconciled, God by them intreats us to intreat him for pardon and mercy, and is ſo willing to be intreated, that ere we ſhall ſit out; hee teacheth us words (as we heard) *Take unto you words*, &c. as he is an able, ſo hee is a willing Phyſitian. Chriſt the great Phyſitian together with his Father expects not that we ſhould firſt come to him, but he comes firſt, and ſends to us. The Phyſitian came to the ſick, though for the moſt part the ſicke (if able) goe to the Phyſitian. But here is the contrary, hee came from Heaven, took our nature upon him, and therein died, by which his blood-ſhedding he ſatisfied the wrath of God, juſtly offended with us. So he heales our ſoules that way, having undergone the anger and wrath of God, that his blood might quench and appeaſe that anger, by a plaiſter thereof made and applied to our ſoules.

2 Cor 5. 20.

1 Ioh. 4 9,10.

Iſa. 53. 10.

Iſa. 53. 11,12.

Doe we doubt of his willingneſſe, when hee comes to us and calls us, *Come unto me all yee that labour and are heavie laden, and I will give you reſt.* It is his Office which he hath aſſumed to heale our ſoules. The many cures he hath done, ſheweth the ability and willingneſſe of the Phyſitian, cures whereof we are uncapable of, by reaſon of our meane condition. A King as his place is greater, ſo ſometimes his ſinnes are greater then others are: yet he cured *Manaſſeth* that

Gods willingnes to ſave us. Mat. 11. 28.

2 King. 33. 12.

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that ſinnefull King, together with *Mary Magdalen*, *Paul*, *Peter*, and the reſt, who were a company healed by this Phyſitian. Therefore all this is for the glory of our Phyſitian, we may ſee what he can doe, by what he hath done: as amongſt us, Phyſitians are ſought after, according to their skill and cures done. Conſider in the Sacrament how ready God is to cure and to heale us, how gratious he is in the Sacrament of Baptiſme, wherein he ingageth us to beleeve, admitting us into the Covenant, and preventing us with mercy, before we knew what a Covenant or Seale was. And ſo to perſwade us of his willingneſſe to forgive our ſinnes and heale our Rebellions, hee hath ordained the Sacrament not for his ſake, but to ſtrengthen our weake faith, and help us. The point is eaſie for matter of our underſtanding, but hard in regard of uſe and Application: eſpecially when it ſhould be made uſe of, in time of temptation, then let us lay it up as a comfortable point, this gratious Promiſe of God, *I will heale their backſliding, I will love them freely*, &c. Lay this up againſt the houre of temptation, make uſe of it then, alleadging unto God his owne Promiſe and nature: as *David* did. *Lord, remember the Promiſe wherein thou haſt cauſed me to truſt.* Thou haſt promiſed *pardoning* and *healing* of all our tranſgreſſions, &c. Remember thy free Promiſes made in Jeſus Chriſt. God cannot denie himſelfe nor his Word, but loves to have his bonds ſued: remember this.

Pſal. 119. 49.

Ezek. 16. 6.

And

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And when conſcience is ſurpriſed with any ſinne (though it be never ſo great) looke not on the diſeaſe ſo much, as who is the phiſitian, and what his plaiſter and medicine is? God is the Phiſitian, and the blood of Chriſt is the Plaiſter. What if our ſinnes be *mountaines*, there is an ocean and a ſea of mercie to ſwell above and *cover theſe mountaines* of our ſinnes. Our ſinnes in this caſe are like fire, which falling into the ſea, is by and by quenched. What if our ſinns bee of never ſo long ſtanding (as theſe their backeſlidings heere, had continued hundreds of yeares, wherein they were a backeſliding generation) yet, it is no matter of what ſtanding or continuance the diſeaſe is, ſo long as God hath promiſed to bee the Phiſitian, and the blood of Chriſt is the Plaiſter that healeth us. The Queſtion is not, what, how many, how great and of what continuance our ſinnes are: but how wee ſtand affected towards them, hate them, and reſolve againſt them. That ſinne connot hurt us which wee fight againſt, mourne for, complaine of, reſolve to leave, and truely hate. Let us never ſtand then in compariſons with our ſinnes, which beare no proportion to the infinite skill and power of our great Phiſitian: and to the infinite worke of Chriſts allſufficient ſatisfaction. What canſt thou object o man? *It is Chriſt that iuſtifieth the ungodly, who art thou that condemneth? It is he that died, yea rather who is riſen againe, who is alſo at the right hand of God, and alſo maketh interceſ-*

Mic. 7. 18, 19.

Iſa. 1. 18, 19.

Rom. 8. 33, 34.

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ſion for us. Thou canſt not ſatisfie for the leaſt ſinne: God hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all. *The chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him, and with his ſtripes wee are healed.*

Levi. 16.21. Iſa. 53.5.

Let us therefore bee wiſe for afterwards, heare, reade, lay up, and meditate for the time to come, for times will come (if wee belong to God) that nothing will content or pacifie the ſoule, but the infinite worth and merit of an infinit and free mercy apprehended in the face of Jeſus Chriſt. When our ſins are ſet in order before us, the ſinnes of our youth, middle, and old age, our ſinnes againſt conſcience, againſt the Law and Goſpell, againſt examples, vowes, Promiſes, Reſolutions, and admonitions of the Spirit and ſervants of God. When there ſhall bee ſuch a terrible accuſer, and God ſhall perhaps let the wounds of conſcience fly open and joyne againſt us; when wrath ſhall appeare, bee in ſome ſort felt, and God preſented to the ſoule, as *a conſuming fire*, no comfort in heaven or earth appearing, hell beneath ſeeming readie to revenge againſt us the quarrell of Gods Covenant. O then for faith to looke through all theſe clouds, to ſee mercy in wrath, love in correction, life in death; the ſweetneſſe of the promiſes, the vertue and merit of Chriſts ſufferings, death, reſurrection, and interceſſion at the right hand; The ſting of death removed, ſinne pardoned and done away, and glory at hand; In ſumme this promiſe made good, which leads unto all this happineſſe

Heb. 12.29.

Heb. 12.6.

1 Cor. 15.55.

happineſſe (as wee ſhall by and by heare) *I will heale their backeſliding, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away.* O this is a marvelous matter then to be perſwaded of. Therfore let us make a right uſe of theſe words in due ſeaſon. For they are, *like appels of gold with pictures of ſilver*, like balme to a greene wound, like delivery in a ſhipwracke: but indeed all compariſons come farre ſhort of this illuſtration, as the terrour of incenſed wrath in the fearefull apprehenſion of eternall unſpeakeable miſerie is beyond any other feare, apprehenſion, or joy. Pro. 25. 11.

But leaſt this grace be abuſed by others (for wee muſt not with-hold the childrens bread, for feare others partake with them unto whom it belongs not) let them know this much, that thoſe who turne this grace into wantonneſſe, and will be evill, becauſe God is thus gracious; that there is no word of comfort in the whole Scripture for them, who ſtand reſolved to goe on in their ſinnes, preſuming of mercy. See what God ſaith in this caſe. *Leaſt there ſhould bee among you a roote that beareth gall and wormewood: and it come to paſſe when hee heareth the words of this curſe that hee bleſſe himſelfe in his heart: ſaying I ſhall have peace, though I walke in the imagination of mine heart, to adde drunkenneſſe to thirſt; The Lord will not ſpare him, but then the anger of the Lord and his iealouſie, ſhall ſmoake againſt that man, and all the curſes that are written in this booke ſhall lie upon him, and the Lord* Deu. 29. 18, 19, 20.

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Pſal. 68. 21.

ſhall blot out his name from under Heaven. God will wound the hairie ſcalpe of ſuch an one, who goes on in his wickednesse, and meanes to bee ſo. And in the *New Teſtament*, thoſe who thus make a progreſſe in ſin, what do they? They are ſaid *to treaſure up unto themſelves wrath, againſt the day of wrath: and revelation of the righteous judgement of God.* Therefore Gods word ſpeakes no comfort to thoſe, who purpoſe to live in any ſinne. All the comfort can bee ſpoken to ſuch is, That yet they are not in hell, that yet they have time to returne to this great Phiſitian of the ſoule. But take ſuch an one in his preſent condition, hee can have no comfort in this eſtate, wherein there is but a ſtep betweene him and hell; So as when the rotten thred of this uncertaine life ſhall faile, or is cut aſunder, downe they fall. Wee have no comfort heere for them, till they returne; This pretious balme belongs to the wounded conſcience. Briefly for uſe then.

Rom. 2. 5.

Vſe.

Seeing that our God is a healing God, as wee can admire the wiſdome, skill, and excellencie of our Phiſitian, ſo let us much more make uſe of him, upon all occaſions; Truſt and cleave to him, not like good *Aſa* (but not good in this) who forgot himſelfe, and ſent firſt to the Phiſitians. But let vs eſpecially rely upon God and looke to him, who can *create help*, and muſt bleſſe all meanes whatſoever. Hee is *a healing God*, who will heale all rebellions, and the moſt grievous ſickneſſes; he is a Phyſition

2 Chro. 16. 12.

Iſa. 45.

that

that is good for all turnes. There are ſome diſeaſes which are called the ſcorne of Phyſitions, as the *Goute*, the *Ague*, and the like, wherein in ſome caſes, they are put to a ſtand and know not what to doe; but God is never at a loſſe, his skill cannot be ſet downe, he is good at all diſeaſes; to pardon all manner of ſins. Therefore, let us goe to him for cure, ſeeing there is neither ſinne, nor griefe, nor terror of conſcience ariſing thereupon which can be ſo great, but God can cure both the ſinne and the terror, (if we take a right courſe) and ſpeake peace to the ſoule. God is a healing God, ariſing when he comes, *with healing in his wings*. As he ſaith, *I will heale their rebellion*, &c. And as he is a healing Phyſition, ſo he puts his patients to no charge, for as he ſaith, *I will heale their backeſliding*, ſo he ſaith, *I will love them freely*. Mal 4.2.

Therefore let us the more build upon this truth, which is indeed the ſumme of all Godlineſſe; For what is the Goſpell, but the triumph of mercy? doe but conſider the ſcope of God in the new covenant, whereof the Sacrament is a ſeale: which is onely to ſhew forth the exaltation of the Grace and Mercie of God in Jeſus Chriſt, above all unworthineſſe whatſoever. For all there, is for the glory of his Mercy. For in the Covenant of grace, mercy doth triumph againſt judgment and juſtice, which mercy of God in Chriſt is ſaid by the Apoſtle, *to raigne unto life everlaſting, by Ieſus Chriſt our Lord*. It reignes, and Rom. 5.21.

That free mercy is the ſcope of God in the new Covenant.

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hath a regiment above, and over all. For mercy in God ſtirred up his Wiſedome to deviſe a way by ſhedding of the blood of Chriſt Jeſus God-man, to ſatisfie divine Juſtice, and rejoyce againſt it. But whence comes this that juſtice ſhould be ſo ſatisfied; becauſe a way is found out how none of Gods Attributes are looſers by mercy. Wherefore in any temptation when we are prone to doubt of Gods love; ſay, what ſhall we wrong God more by calling in queſtion his mercy, and the excellency of his loving kindneſſe which is more then any other ſinne we have committed? This is a ſin ſuperadded againſt his Mercy, Power, Goodneſſe, Gratiouſneſſe and Love in healing of ſinne: which takes away the glory of God in that Attribute, wherein he labours to triumph, reigne, and glorifie himſelfe moſt, and *which is over all his workes.* Therefore he that offends herein, in denying God the glory of his great, tender unſpeakeable mercy, whereby he would glorifie himſelfe moſt in the Covenant of grace, he offends God moſt.

That the greateſt ſin which is pardonable is to denie God the glory of his mercy.

Pſal. 145. 9.

Therefore, let us at ſuch times as God awakens conſcience, be ſo farre from thinking that God is unwilling to cure and helpe us, as to thinke that hereby we ſhall Honour God more by beleeving, then we diſhonoured him by our ſinne. For the faith of an humble contrite ſinner it glorifies God more then our better obedience in other things doth: becauſe it gives him the glory of that wherein he delights; and will

That we honour God moſt of all by giving him the glory of his mercy.

be

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be moſt glorified: *the glory of his mercy and truth,* of his rich abundant mercy that hath no bounds. There is no compariſon betweene the mercy of God in the Covenant of grace, and that to *Adam* in the ſtate of nature: for in the firſt he did good to a good man, firſt hee made him good, and then did him good: but when man did degenerate, and was fallen into ſuch a curſed eſtate as we are, for God then to be good to a ſinner, and freely to doe good, heere is goodneſſe indeed, triumphant goodneſſe. *Cain* was a curſed perſon, who ſaid, *my puniſhment is greater then can bee borne,* wee know who ſpake it; no, God is a Phyſitian for all diſeaſes, if they be *Crimſon ſinnes,* he can make them *white as wooll.* Gen. 4. 13. Iſa. 1. 18.

An incouragement to ſearch our ſins deeply.

Who would not be carefull therefore to ſearch his wounds, his ſinnes to the bottome? let the ſearch be as deepe as we can, conſidering that there is more *mercy* in God, then there can be *ſinne* in us. Who would favour his ſoule, eſpecially conſidering, if he neglect ſearching of it, ſinnes will grow deadly and incurable upon that neglect. Let this therefore incourage us not to ſpare our ſelves, in opening the wounds of our ſoules to God; that hee may ſpare all. Thus we ſaw formerly, The Church here is brought in dealing plainely with God and confeſſing all (for ſhe had an excellent Teacher) and God anſwers all; beginning with this, *I will heale their backſliding.* They were Idolaters, and guilty of the ſinnes of the ſecond

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Table in a high meaſure (no pettie ſinnes) yet God ſaith, *I will heale their backſliding*, &c. Which being healed, then an open high-way is made for all other mercies whatſoever, which is the next point we Obſerve hence;

Obſerv. *That the cheefe mercy of all, which leades unto all the reſt, is the pardon and forgiveneſſe of ſinnes.*

Healing of the guilt of ſinne we ſee is ſet in the front of theſe Petitions formerly ſhewed: which as it is the firſt thing in the Churches deſires, *Take away all iniquity*, &c. So it is the firſt thing yeelded to in Gods Promiſe; *I will heale their backſliding*, &c. Pardon of ſin, and cure of ſinne, whereby the conſcience ceaſeth to be bound over to condemnation is the firſt and chiefeſt bleſſing of God, and is that for which the Church falls out in a triumph. *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſion of the remnant of his heritage, becauſe hee delighteth in mercy?* &c. And this is that excellent and ſweet concluſion of the new Covenant alſo, whereupon all the reſt of thoſe former foregoing mercies there are grounded: *for, I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their ſinne no more.* Yea this is the effect of that grand Promiſe made to his Church after the returne of their captivity. *In thoſe daies, and at that time ſaith the Lord, the iniquity of Iſrael ſhall bee ſought for: and there ſhall be none, and the ſins of Iudah, and they ſhall not bee found; for, I will pardon*

Micah. 7. 18, 19, 20.

Ier. 31. 34.

Jer. 50. 20.

pardon them whom I reſerve. The point is plaine, and cleere enough, it needs no following. The Reaſon is,

Reaſon.

Becauſe it takes away the interpoſing cloud: God is gratious in himſelfe, pardon of ſinne remooves the cloud betwixt Gods gratious face and the ſoule. Naturally God is a ſpring of mercy, but our ſinnes ſtop the ſpring, but when ſinne is pardoned, the ſtop is taken away, and the ſpring runs amaine. God is not merciſull, as a flint yeelds fire by force, but as a ſpring whence water naturally iſſues.

Queſt.

Seeing forgiveneſſe of ſinnes unſtops this ſpring, why doe we not feele this mercy?

Anſw.

Why we want the ſenſe of the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes.

Surely, becauſe ſome ſin or other is upon the file uncancelled, perhaps unconfeſſed, or becauſe we are ſtuft with Pride that wee beleeve not, or are ſo troubled, or trouble our ſelves, that we apprehend not, or beleeve not the pardon of ſinnes confeſſed and hated. But ſure it is, *Forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, unſtops the ſpring of mercy, and unvailes Gods gratious face in Ieſus Chriſt unto us.* Sinne being not pardoned, this ſtops, as the Prophet ſpeakes, *our iniquity* is that which keepes good things from us. Therfore the cheefe mercy is that which remooves, that which unſtops the current of all mercy: *I will heale their backſliding*, &c. Looke as a condemned Priſoner in the Tower, let him have all contentment, as long as he is in the diſpleaſure of the Prince, ſtands condemned, and the ſentence unreverſed, what true contentment can hee

he have? none at all. So it is with a ſinner, that hath not his pardon and *quietus eſt* from heaven: yeeld him all contentment which the world can affoord; all the ſatisfaction that can iſſue from the creature; yet, what is this to him, as long as he hath not mercy, and that his conſcience is not pacified, becauſe it is not cleanſed and waſhed with the blood of Chriſt?

Ionah 1.4. Ioſh. 7.11,12. Sinne is like *Ionas*, whilſt he was in the ſhip there was nothing but tempeſt: like *Achan* in the Armie, whilſt he was not found out Gods judgement followed the campe. Sinne is that which troubleth all, therefore it muſt be taken away firſt, and therewith all evill is taken away: therefore, the firſt mercy is a forgiving, pardoning and quieting mercy. When the blood of Jeſus Chriſt by the hand of faith is ſprinkled upon the ſoule, God creating a hand of faith to ſprinkle and ſhed it upon the ſoule; *Chriſt loved mee, and gave himſelfe for mee*, then the ſoule ſaith, though my ſinnes be great, yet the ſatisfaction of Chriſt is greater: God hath loved me, and gave his owne Sonne for me, and I apply this to my ſelfe, as it is offered to me, and take the offer, this pacifieth the ſoule, as it is written, *The Blood of Chriſt who through the eternall Spirit offered himſelfe without ſpot to God*; is that *which purgeth our conſcience from dead workes to ſerve the living God.* To a Repentant ſinner, this *Blood of ſprinkling ſpeakes better things then the blood of Abell:* not as his blood cried for vengeance:

Heb. 9.14.

Heb. 12.24.

but

but *mercy, mercy*. When the ſoule is thus pacified, there is the foundation of all other mercy whatſoever. The Order is this, when God is reconciled all is reconciled, when God is at peace with us in the Forgiveneſſe of ſins, then all is peaceable at home and abroad, conſcience is in peace within, and all the creatures at peace without, all which with all that befalls us, have a commaand to doe us no hurt: as *David* gave charge to the people of *Abſolom*. When God is reconciled, and at peace, all things are at peace with us; for is not he Lord of Hoſts, who hath the command of all the creatures? therefore this grace of forgiveneſſe is the chiefe grace.

To ſhew it in one inſtance more; *David* was a King and a Prophet, a comely and a valorous perſon, but what eſteemd he moſt? did he ſay, bleſſed is the man, who is a King or a Prophet, or a valiant Warriour, or hath Dominion, Obedience, or great poſſeſſions as I have? O no, *Bleſſed is the man whoſe ſinnes are forgiven, and whoſe iniquities are covered.* You ſee wherein this holy man *David* ſets and pitcheth happineſſe? in the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes: Bleſſed is ſuch a man. Though he were a great King, he knew well enough, that if his ſinnes were not pardoned and covered, he had beene a wretched man. Pſal. 32. 1.

Therefore, this ſhould teach us to deſire of God continually the pardon of our ſinnes, and wee ſhould make it the cheefe deſire of our ſoules, *Vſe.* 1.

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ſoules, that God would ſhine upon them in Jeſus Chriſt, pardon and accept us in his beloved, they goe together.

Vſe. 2.

Pſal. 103.

And bleſſe him for this above all other bleſſings, as it is *Pſal.* 103. 1, 3. *Bleſſe the Lord O my ſoule, and all that is within me bleſſe his holy Name,* &c. Why? *Who forgiveth all thy iniquities, and healeth all thy diſeaſes.* We ſhould bleſſe God moſt of all for this, that he hath deviſed a way by Chriſt to receive ſatisfaction for ſinne, to pardon it, and ſay unto our ſoules, *I am thy ſalvation:* this is the greateſt favour of all.

Queſt.

But you aske, How ſhall I know, that God hath healed my ſoule in regard of the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes?

Anſw.

How to know that God hath pardoned our ſinnes.

I.

If with pardoning there be ſubduing.

The anſwer is, *if together with pardon of ſinne, he heale ſinne:* for God when he takes away the venome of a wound that indangers death, the deadly diſeaſe, he takes away alſo the ſwelling of the wound and glowing of it. When hee ceaſeth to make it deadly, he heales the ſoule withall, and *ſubdues our iniquities*, as his Promiſe is. So there is together with pardoning mercy, curing mercy in regard of Sanctification. Where God is a Father to make us Sonnes, he is a Father to beget us anew: ſo where Chriſt comes by *Blood* to waſh away our ſinnes, hee comes by *Water* alſo and the *Holy Ghoſt:* where he is a *Comforter* in the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, he is a *Sanctifier:* And the ſoule of a diſtreſſed ſinner lookes to the one as well as the other. Aske the ſoule of any man who is truly humbled,

bled, what doe you chiefly deſire? O, that God would pardon my ſinnes: But is that all? No; That he would alſo heale my ſinnes, and ſubdue my Rebellions; that I may not any longer be under the government and tyrannie of my luſts; but under Gods gratious governement, who will guide me better then before. Hoſ.2.7. This we ſee to be the Order in the *Lords Prayer*; after we are taught to ſay, *Forgive us our treſpaſſes*, Mat.6.12,13. it followes, *And leade us not into temptation, but deliver us from evill*, which is for the time to come: So *David*, *Cleanſe me from my ſecret ſinnes, and keepe me that preſumptuous ſins have not dominion over me*, &c. Pſal.19.12,13. So that this is the deſire of an afflicted conſcience truly humbled; curing as well as covering of ſinne. This is a ſure evidence that our ſins are pardoned.

Then againe *when there is peace*, when the ſoule feeles this, it is a ſigne that God hath heal'd the ſoule: *For* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *being juſtified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Ieſus Chriſt*, the Blood of Chriſt hath a pacifying power in forgiveneſſe of ſinnes. When *Ionas* was caſt out there was a calme: So when ſinne is caſt out and pardoned, there is a calme in the ſoule; which comes from the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes.

2. *By Peace.* Rom.5.1.

Againe, Healing is knowne by this, if wee have hearts willing to be ſearched, for then our will is cured, which in the ſtate of grace is more then our Obedience: when we would be better then we are, then certainely our will is not in league

3. *When we are willing to be ſearched.*

league with corruptions. Now where the will is ſo much ſanctified, I reſolve to be better, I would be better, and I uſe all meanes, being glad when any joynes with me againſt my corruptions, I am glad of all ſuch advantages, here is a good ſigne. As now, when a man goes to Church, and deſires, O that my corruptions might be met withall, O that I might bee laid open to my ſelfe, and know my ſelfe better then I have formerly done: this is the deſire of an ingenuous ſoule. Where there is no guile of ſoule, a man is glad to have himſelfe and his corruptions diſcovered, whereas another frets and kicks, and rageth againſt the Word of God, which is a ſigne that there is ſome league betwixt him and his ſinne. You have ſome, that above all things in the world, they would not have ſuch and ſuch downe-right Miniſters: O take heed this is a ſigne of a hollow heart, and that a man is in love with his diſeaſe: can there be a cure where there is a love of the diſeaſe?

4. By our eſtimation of heavenly and earthly things. Coloſſ. 3. 1.

Not to name many, the laſt (which is a high pitch) ſhall be *by our eſtimation of things here and above:* What hath this healing wrought in thee? What eſtimation of things? How is thy heart weaned from the world? How are thy affections ſet on things which are above? When a ſick man is ſoundly recovered, though his diſtempered pallate could not reliſh the beſt meates in his ſickneſſe, yet now he reliſhes and loves the beſt moſt of all. Looke then to our ſelves,

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ſelves, how forget we with bleſſed Saint *Paul*, *the things which are behind, preſſing hard to the marke which is before, for the high price of that Calling?* How ſtand wee affected to long for our Countrey, this world being only the place of our pilgrimage? Surely a ſoule that is ſoundly healed, is an undervaluing ſoule, to uſe this world and all things therein as though we uſed them not: and it is alſo a valewing ſoule, to covet ſpirituall things above all. *O* (ſaith *David*) *how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day. I love thy Commandements above gold, yea above fine gold.* The joy of this eſtate, *is a joy unſpeakeable and glorious:* of which it is ſaid, *the ſtranger ſhall not meddle with.* This much concerning the diſeaſe, before we come to the cure, a Queſtion ariſeth.

Phil 3.13.

1 Cor.7.29.30

Pſal.119.79. 127.

1 Pet.1.8.

Pro.14 10.

Queſt. Whence then comes a calme in a carnall perſon?

Anſw. From ignorance and deadneſſe of conſcience, or from diverſion: as a ſick man when he talkes with another man that is his friend, his minde is diverted that he feeleth not his ſickneſſe all the while; ſo wicked men, either their conſciences are ſeared, and they goe on in ſin, or elſe they have diverſions. Great perſons are loath to heare, and are uſually full of diverſions, from the time they riſe, till they ſleepe againe: all diverſions buſie conſcience about other things, ſo they keepe themſelves that it may not trouble them. But the peace of a true Chriſtian comes from another ground; from ſound knowledge of

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of his diſeaſe, and from ſound ſatisfaction, by faith knowing Chriſt; the Spirit of God ſealing this knowledge to the ſoule: if peace bee thus ſetled, it is a ſigne of a ſound cure.

Queſt. But you will ſay, How ſhall I know that my ſinnes are pardoned, when I am ſubject to thoſe ſins ſtill?

Anſw. *How to know pardon of ſin, when corruption gives joyles ſtill.* Not to ſpeake of tranſient actuall ſinnes, that are paſt and pardoned when we have repented of them: but of the roote of all ſinne, which is weakeneſſe and corruption in us, fortified and (as it were) intrenched by nature, occaſions and cuſtome, of this the Queſtion is; How to diſcerne of pardon, the roote of ſinne remaining, and now and then foyling us? The Anſwer is Affirmative, we may have that ſinne pardoned, which yet occaſionally may foyle us ſtill. For a man is in the ſtate of health, though he have the dregs of a diſeaſe hanging upon him, whereby a man ofttimes hath ſome little fit of the diſeaſe. When nature and phyſicke hath prevailed over the diſeaſe; yet after that, there may be grudgings. So when God hath cured the ſoule by pardon, and hath begun to cure in Sanctification, the cure is wrought, though ſome dregs remaine: becauſe thoſe dregs are carried away with daily phyſicke, and daily flying to God, *Lord forgive our debts, Lord heale us*: every prayer and renewing of Repentance carries ſome debt away, till death comes, that excellent Phyſitian, which once for all perfectly cures both ſoule and body bringing both

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both there where both ſhall have Perfection.

But you will ſay, is Gods grace weake, that it cannot carrie away all dregs of corruption, as well as pardon? Why is pardon in the forgiveneſſe of ſins abſolute, when yet God ſuffers the dregs to remaine, ſo as we ſtill are ſubject to the diſeaſe of ſinne? *Queſt.*

God is wiſe, let us not quarrell with our Phyſitian, for he is wiſer then we our ſelves: for he makes theſe reliques medicinall to us: as thus, Naturally we are prone to ſecurity and ſpirituall pride, therefore he makes a medicine of our infirmities, to cure ſpirituall pride and ſecurity, and to ſet us a worke. Therefore the *Iebuſites* and the reſidue of that kinde, were left uncaſt out from among Iſrael, that thereby he might proove Iſrael, and leaſt they ſhould be a prey unto wilde beaſts to devoure them. So ſome remainders of the fleſh are left ſtill in the beſt, that theſe wilde beaſts might not prey upon their ſoules, ſpirituall pride, which is a deteſtable ſinne, robbing and denying God of his Prerogative, and ſecurity, the grave of the ſoule: to cure theſe two eſpecially, God makes the reliques and remainders of ſinne a medicine unto us. *Anſw.* Judg. 3. 1.

Why doth God ſuffer theſe infirmities and diſeaſes to remaine in us? *Queſt.*

Diſeaſes are ſuffered to put us in minde of infirmities in the roote, which we knew not before; for if theſe ſhould not ſometimes breake forth into a diſeaſe, we would thinke our nature were pure: therfore God ſuffers them to breake *Anſw.* *Why God ſuffers diſeaſes and infirmities to remaine in us*

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forth into diſeaſes. Who would have thought that *Moſes* had beene paſſionate? certainely himſelfe did not know himſelfe at the waters of ſtrife: that the ſeeds of anger ſhould be in the meekeſt man in the world? who would have thought that *David* whoſe heart ſmote him for cutting off the lap of *Sauls* garment, that ſo milde a man ſhould have cruelty in him? and yet after that, he committed murther. Who would have thought that *Peter*, who made ſuch proteſtations of love to Chriſt, that though all men forſooke him, yet he would not, yet after that ſhould denie his Maſter, and forſweare him? all which was to ſhew us, that it is uſefull for us ſometimes to have our corruptions breake out, to put us in minde what inward weakeneſſes wee have unknowne and unſearched in us, and that wee may know the depth of our corruption. Gods children are gainers by all their infirmities and weakeneſſes, whereby they learne to ſtand ſtronger. Heere is a maine difference betwixt the ſlips of Gods children, and the ordinarie euill courſes of others: they grow worſe and worſe, the ofter they fall into ſin, the more they are ſetled upon their dregs. But Gods child hath the remainders of corruption in him from whence he hath infirmities, and whence hee breaks into diſeaſes: but notwithſtanding, corruption is a looſer hereby; for the ofter he falls into ſinne, it is the weaker and weaker: for the more he ſees the roote of it, the more he hates it, reſolves and ſtrives againſt it; till it be conſummated

Numb 20. 12.

1 Sam. 24. 5.

Mat. 26. 33. 69, &c.

That Gods children are gainers by their affliction and weakeneſſes.

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mated by Repentance and Sanctifying grace. Let no man therefore be too much caſt downe for infirmities, though ofttimes they breake out, if thereupon we finde a renewed hatred, Repentance and ſtrength againſt them: for God looks not ſo much how much corruption there is in us, as how we ſtand affected to it, and what good there is: whether we be in league with it, and reſiſt it. It is not ſinne that damnes men, but ſin with the ill qualities: ſin unconfeſſed, not grieved for, and unreſiſted, elſe God hath holy ends in leaving corruption in us, to exerciſe, trie us, and keepe us from other ſinnes, Therefore ſinne is left uncured.

In what caſe we may be comforted, though infirmities breake out.

Now the way to have it cured, both in the Pardon, and likewiſe in *Sanctification* we have it in the Context; what doth God ſay? *I will heale their backſliding*, &c. after they had ſearched their hearts, and thereupon found iniquity; and then prayed, *Take away all iniquity*, after they had deſired a divorſe from their ſinnes, *Aſſur ſhall not ſave us:* and when they had ſome faith that God would cure them, and accordingly put confidence in God, *the Father of the Fatherleſſe.* Then ſaith God, *I will heale their backſliding*, ſo that ſenſe of pardon in the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, and ſenſe of grace, comes after ſight, ſenſe, wearineſſe and confeſſion of ſinne. God doth not pardon ſinne, when it is not ſeene, ſorrowed for, nor confeſſed, and where there is not ſome degree of faith, to come to God *the*

The way to have ſinne cured both in heaven and in ſenſe of conſcience by Sanctification.

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Father of the Fatherleſſe, and the great Phyſitian of ſoules. When wee do this, as it is ſaid in the Context, then wee finde the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, with the gratious power of Gods Spirit healing of our diſeaſes. *I will heale their backſliding.*

Let us therefore remember this, leaſt we deceive our ſoules; for it is not ſo eaſie a thing to attaine unto forgiveneſſe of ſinnes as wee thinke.

That though orgiveneſſe of ſinnes bee freely given: yet the preparing way thereunto coſts us deare.

And then againe, though forgiveneſſe of ſinnes bee free, yet notwithſtanding there is a way whereby wee come to forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, that coſts us ſomewhat; God humbles the ſoule firſt, brings a man to himſelfe, to thinke of his courſe, to lay open his ſinnes and ſpread them before God in confeſſion, and working upon the ſoule heartie Repentance: ſo to come to God, and waite for forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, perhaps a good while before there be a report of it. There are none who have ſins forgiven, but they know how they come by it: for there is a prediſpoſition wrought in a mans ſoule by the Spirit which teacheth him, what eſtate he is in, and what his danger is, whereupon followes confeſſion, and upon that peace. God keepes his children many times a long while upon the racke before hee ſpeakes peace unto them in the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, becauſe hee would not have them thinke ſleightly of the riches of his mercy. It is no eaſie matter to attaine unto the ſenſe of the for-

forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, though indeed wee ſhould ſtrive to attaine it, that ſo wee may walke in the comforts of the Holy Ghoſt. The difficulty of obtaining or recovering the ſenſe of forgiveneſſe, may be ſeene in *David*; after his fall did hee eaſily obtaine ſenſe of pardon? O no, God held him on the racke a long time, *He roared all the day long, his moiſture was turned into the drought of Summer.* Pſal 32. 3, 4. But when hee had reſolved a through and no ſleight confeſſion; when he had reſolved to ſhame himſelfe, and glorifie God; then ſaith he; *And thou forgaveſt my ſinne*, but till he dealt throughly with his ſoule without all guile, he felt no comfort. So it is with the children of God, when in the ſtate of grace they fall into ſinne; it is no ſleight, *Lord have mercy upon me*, that will ſerve the turne; but a through ſhaming of themſelves before God, and a through confeſſion, reſolving and determining to be under another governement; to have Chriſt to governe them, as well as to pardon them: God will no otherwiſe do it. Becauſe hee would glorifie his rich mercy herein: for who would give mercy its due glory, if forgiveneſſe were eaſily attained without ſhaming of our ſelves? If it came eaſily without proteſtation and waiting upon God, (as the Church heere) we ſhould never be throughly humbled for our ſinnes, and God would never have the glory of his mercy, nor knowne to bee ſo juſt in hating of ſinne in his deare

Why the ſoule muſt waite and be humbled before the ſenſe of the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes.

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children, who long agoe upon ſuch tearmes have attained ſenſe of forgiveneſſe of ſinnes. It is worth our trouble to ſearch our ſoules, and to waite at Chriſts feete, never to give over untill we have attained the ſenſe of forgiveneſſe of ſinne. It is heaven upon earth to have our conſciences inlarged with Gods favour in the pardon of ſin.

That there can be no ſenſe of pardon, where Humiliation and Reformation is wanting.

What is the Reaſon that many profeſſe, that God is mercifull, and Chriſt hath pardoned their ſinnes, *&c.* if the ground be right, it is a high conceit of *mercy*: and ſuch have beene ſoundly humbled for their ſinnes. But doſt thou profeſſe ſo who liveſt careleſly in thy ſinnes and licentiouſly ſtill; ſurely thy ground is naught, for hadſt thou beene upon the racke, in Gods ſcalding-houſe and ſmarted ſoundly for ſinne; wouldeſt thou take pleaſure ſtill to live in ſinne? O no. Thoſe that goe on careleſly in their actions and ſpeeches not caring what they are, did they ever ſmart for ſinne who carrie themſelves thus? Surely theſe were never ſoundly humbled for ſinne, nor confeſſed them with loathing and deteſtation. Therefore let us marke the Context heere inferred: after they had confeſſed, praied and waited, reſolving Reformation in their falſe confidence: then God promiſeth, *I will heale their backſliding*. It is a fundamentall error in a Chriſtian courſe, the ſleighting of true humiliation, which goes along in all the Fabrick and frame of a Chriſtian courſe. Let a man not be ſoundly hum-

humbled with the ſight of his ſins, his faith is weaker, and his Sanctification and comfort the ſleighter. Whereas if a man would deale truly with his owne heart, ſet up a Court there, and arraigne, judge, and condemne himſelfe (which is Gods end in all his dealings, afflictions, and judgements inflicted upon us) the deeper wee went in this courſe, the more would our comfort be and the report of Gods mercy, in the ſenſe of that which followes: *I will love them freely, for mine Anger is turned away.*

The end of the fifth Sermon.

THE SIXTH SERMON.

Hos. 14. 4, 5.

---I will love them freely, for mine Anger is turned away.

I will be as the Dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the Lillie, and cast forth his Roote as Lebanon.

IT was a good speech of S. *Austin*, those that are to petition great persons, they will obtaine some who are skilfull to frame their Petitions, least by their unskillfullnesse they provoke Anger insteed of carrying away the benefit

benefit deſired. So it is here with Gods people being to deale with the great God, and not being able to frame their owne petitions, God (as we heard before) doth it for them: and anſwers them gratiouſly with the ſame mercies which he had ſuggeſted them to aske; his anſwer being exact to their petitions, *I will heale their backſliding, I will love them freely*, &c. wherein God exceeds all Phyſitians in the world whatſoever, for they have nature to helpe them. *Phyſicke is the mid-wife of Nature*, helping it to doe that which it cannot doe of it ſelfe: Phyſick can doe nothing to a dead man; but God is ſo great a Phyſitian, that hee firſt gives life, and after that ſpirituall Life is in ſome degrees begun, by little and little he heales more and more. *I will heale their backſlidings.*

We have an error crept in amongſt ſome of the meaner ignorant ſort of people, who thinke that God ſees no ſinne, when he hath once pardoned men in Juſtification, who falſely ſmooth themſelves in this wicked ſenſuall conceit, thinke they can commit no ſinne offenſive to God; as though God ſhould frame ſuch a Juſtification for men, to blindfold him and caſt duſt (as it were) in his eyes: or juſtifie men to make them looſe and idle. No, it is falſe, as appeareth by this place; for how can God heale that he ſees not? He ſees it not to be revenged on them for it, but hee ſees ſinne, to correct it and to heale it. He ſees it not after a revengefull wrathfull juſtice to caſt us into Hell and damne

us for it; but he ſees it after a ſort to make us ſmart and lament for it, and to have many times a bitter ſenſe of his wrath and forſaking, as men undone without a new ſupply of comfort and peace from Heaven. Let a man neglect Sanctification, daily ſorrow and confeſſion of ſinne, and now and then even craving new pardon for ſinnes paſt, caſting all upon a fantaſticke conceit of faith in their juſtification: what followes, but Pride, Hardneſſe of heart, Contempt of others and neglect of better then themſelves, and proneneſſe, out of Gods judgement, to fall from ill to worſe, from one error to another? In this caſe the heart is falſe and deceitfull, for whilſt it pretends a glorious faith to looke back to Chriſt, to live by faith, and lay all on him by juſtification; it windes it ſelfe out of all taskes of Religion, ſets the heart at liberty, neglects Sanctification and Mortification of luſts, and beautifying the image of God in them, giving too much way to the fleſh. Therefore away with this falſe and ſelfe-conceited opinion: which drawes poyſon out of that which God ſpeakes to confirme and ſtabliſh us, *That hee ſees no iniquity in Iaakob*, &c. Whence from theſe Hyperbolicall ſpeeches, they thinke that God ſeeth not that which we our ſelves ſee. But, *hee heales our backſlidings*, therefore hee ſees them, for how can he heale a wound, if he ſee it not? He ſees it, but not to their deſtruction who are freely juſtified by his grace. But we will leave this point, it being too much honour to them to

ſpend

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ſpend time in confutation of it and will rather ſay unto it, as *Iſay* ſpeakes of a menſtruous cloth, *get thee hence.*

Iſa 30.22.

Now as God is a moſt gratious God, never weary of well doing and comforting his people, becauſe it is his nature to be mercifull: So hee hath ſuteable expreſſions of it, hee goes on with mercy upon mercy, loving kindneſſe upon loving kindneſſe. Hee had promiſed before: *I will heale their Backeſlidings*, take in ſumme all their Apoſtacie, all ſhall bee healed. But this is not all, hee anſwers all the accuſations and doubts of Satan: who is ſtill objecting againſt us our unworthineſſe, miſerie, wretchedneſſe to have ſuch favours conferred on ſuch filthy creatures: Therefore, hee takes of all with this which followeth, as they had prayed, *Receive us graciouſly*; So the anſwer is full, and ſuitable to their requeſt.

I will love them freely.

Put caſe, they out of conſcience of their own guilt ſhould ſee no worth in themſelves or cauſe why they ſhould bee reſpected: yet I ſee reaſon in mine owne love.

I will love them freely.

Queſt. *Anſw.* But may ſome ſay, How can God love freely? Aske thy ſelfe, doth not a father and a mother love their child freely? what doth the child deſerve of the father and mother a great while? Nothing, but the mother hath many a weary night, and foule hand with it. Hath God planted an affection in us to love our children

children freely, and ſhall not God much more who gives this love and plants it in us, bee admitted to love freely. But indeed there is abſurdity and infidelity in diſtruſt. For it is againſt reaſon to deny the mighty God that which wee have in our ſelves. If hee did not love freely, how could hee love at all? what could hee fore-ſee in us to love us for before hand? the very manhood of Chriſt deſerved not the grace of union, it was freely given.

I will love them freely.

That which firſt of al we obſerve hence is this much. *That God loves his people freely.* So *Rom.* 5. 8, 9. Saith the Apoſtle. *God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet ſinners, Chriſt dyed for us: much more being juſtified by his blood, wee ſhall bee ſaved from wrath through him.* The like wee have in *Ezekiell*, ſaith God, Therefore, ſay unto the houſe of *Iſraell*, thus ſaith the Lord God, *I doe not this for your ſakes O houſe of Iſraell, but for mine holy Names ſake, which ye have profaned among the heathen whether ye went.* *Adam* when hee had ſinned that maine great ſinne, what did hee? fly from God, run away, and when God called to him and debated the matter with him, he accuſed God, and excuſed himſelfe. Yet for all this God pittied him, and cloathed him, and made him that promiſe of the bleſſed ſeed. What deſert was there here in *Adam*? nay, rather the quite contary: yet God *loved him freely.* The ſame may bee ſaid of Saint *Paul* for the time

Obſerv.

Ezek. 36. 22.

Gen. 3. 12, 13.

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time paſt a perſecuter, what deſerving was there in him? none at all, yet hee found Gods free love in his converſion: for ſaith God to *Ananias*; *Hee is a choſen veſſell unto mee, to beare my name before the Gentiles.* Heere was no deſerving in Saint *Paul*, but Gods free election which in time tooke place, and ſo wee may ſay of the *Prodigall* having ſpent all, his Father pardoned all and loved him freely.

Act. 9. 15.

Act. 9. 5.

Luk. 15. 20.

The Reaſon hereof is. 1. *Becauſe it is his name and nature to bee gratious*, and to loue freely, and whatſoever is Gods nature, that hath a freedome in the working.

Reaſon 1.

Exo. 34. 6.

2. *Becauſe no creature can deſerve any thing at Gods hands.* 1. Becauſe by nature wee are all Gods enemies and therefore what can enemies deſerve? nothing but wrath and vengeance. 2. If we have any graces, they are the gift of God, and therefore wee deſerve nothing by them, they being of his owne gift. So ſaint *Iames* ſpeakes, *Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above and commeth downe from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableneſſe nor ſhadow of turning.* And Saint *Paul* ſaith: *That of him, and through him, and to him are all things:* what ſhould follow heereupon? *To whom be glory for ever.*

Reaſon 2.

Iam. 1. 17.

Rom. 11. 36.

Vſe. 1. This in the firſt place ſerves for reproofe of our adverſaries of the Romiſh Church: who ſay, that God loves us for ſomething foreſeene in us which is good: or for ſomewhat which in time wee would doe to deſerve favour at his hands.

hands: but both are falſe, the cauſe of love is free from himſelfe: for, *when wee have done our beſt*, yet (ſaith the Holy Ghoſt) *wee are unprofitable ſervants.* Luk. 17. 10.

Secondly, It is for reproofe of Gods owne deare children, who becauſe they finde no deſerving in themſelves, are therefore diſcouraged at the ſight of their owne unworthineſſe, whereas quite contrary, the ſight of our owne unworthineſſe, ſhould make us the more fit ſubjects for Chriſts free love: which hath nothing to doe with them that ſtand upon deſerving. Many of Gods deare children are troubled with temptations, doubts, and feares of Gods love and favour towards them, becauſe they expect to finde it in the fruits of *Grace*, and not in *free Grace* it ſelfe. If wee would have any ſound peace, let us look for it in *free Grace*. Therefore the bleſſed Apoſtle, in the entrance of his ſalutations in his Epiſtles, ſtill joyneth *Grace*, and then *Peace*, to ſhew us that if wee looke for ſound *Peace*; wee can no where finde it but in *Grace*. Wee would finde *Peace*, in the *Grace* that is in us; but it is labour in vaine, for wee ſhall never finde it but in *free Grace*. *Vſe.* 2.

Hence wee may alſo bee comforted in the certainety of our ſalvation; for that grace and love and favour whereby wee are ſaved is in God, not in us. Now whatſoever is in him is immutable and ſure. So ſaith the Apoſtle, *Neverthelesſe the foundation of God ſtandeth ſure, having this ſeale, the Lord knoweth them that are his;* 2 Tim 2. 19. *Vſe.* 3.

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his; and let every one that nameth the name of Chriſt, depart from iniquity. Where ſpeaking of election which comes from the free love of God, hee makes that a ſure foundation to build on; if there bee a reformation *to depart from iniquity*, wee may be comfortably aſſured of our ſalvation. And as it is with *Election*, ſo is it with all the other fruits of God love: *Vocation, Adoption, Iuſtification*, and *Perſeverance*: the foundation of God faſtly ſealed in the way of holineſſe ſtands good and ſure in all.

Rom. 3. 24. Joh. 13. 1.

Vſe. 4. This further teacheth us, Thankfulneſſe unto God, who hath ſo freely loved us, for if there were deſerving on our part, what place were left for thankfulneſſe? We know one who deſerves nothing and hath ſmall matters beſtowed upon him, at leaſt will be thankfull for ſuch favours. But when one is ſo farre from deſerving any thing, that by the contrary hee deſerveth all plagues and puniſhments: hath yet many and aboundant mercies beſtowed freely upon him, this doth exceedingly provoke (eſpecially a generous ſpirit) to a ſuitable thankfulneſſe, as much as may be.

Vſe. 5. And let it likewiſe breed Confidence in us to God in all our miſeries, both for pardon of ſinne, helpe in diſtreſſe, and comfort in ſorrowes, becauſe he *loves us freely*, and did love us whilſt we were enemies: make therefore upon all occaſions the Apoſtles uſe of it. *For if when wee were enemies wee were reconciled to God*

Rom. 5. 10.

by

by the death of his ſonne; much more being reconciled, wee ſhall be ſaved by his life?

I will love them freely.

In the next place, from hence we obſerve another point which neceſſarily followeth upon the former: *That God did not then begin to love them, when he ſaid I will love them freely: but to diſcover that love unto them, which hee carried unto them from all eternity.* For inſtance hereof Saint *Paul* was beloved of God, ere God manifeſted his love unto him: as hee teſtifieth of himſelfe, that the diſcoverie of this *free love* was, *when it pleaſed God who ſeperated me from my mothers wombe, and called mee by his Grace, to reveale his ſonne in mee,* &c. So *Epheſ.* 1. 3, 4. The Apoſtle bleſſeth God in his ſalutation unto them, *who had bleſſed them with all ſpirituall bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt.* But whence fetcheth hee the ground hereof? *According as he hath choſen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we ſhould be holy and unblameable before him, in love.* Wee need not multiply places more to prove it, our adverſaries would faine ſeeme to cleere God onely in all, and ſo ſhrowd their arguments under ſuch needleſſe pretences, ſhift of all places, name wee never ſo many with their ſtrong heads, diſtinctions, and ſophiſmes. But God will one day give them no thankes for their labour: the *will* of God (how unequall ſoever in our eyes, who cannot with our ſhallow conceits ſound the depth of ſuch miſteries) being ground

Obſerv.

Gal. 1. 15. 16.

Ephe. 1. 4.

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enough to justifie all his actions whatsoever. Wee will therefore come to some Reasons of the point.

Reason. 1. Because, *Whatsoever is in God* (manifested in time) *is eternall and everlasting in him, without beginning and ending*, for whatsoever is in God, is God. God is not loving, but Love: and he is not onely true, but Truth it selfe: hee is not wise onely, but *Wisdome* it selfe. And therefore his love discovered in time, must needs bee from all eternity.

1 Joh. 4. 8. Joh. 14. 6.

2. Secondly, If God did then first begin to love us, when he manifested his love unto us, then there should be a change in God; because hee should *love* them now, that hee did not formerly *love*, As wee see, those who loved *Paul* after his Conversion, loved him not before, there was then a change in the Church: in which case, if God should so love, hee should bee changeable, and so be like unto man.

3. And then againe Christs Prayer. *Iohn.* 17. makes it cleere, that the love of God beginneth not with the manifestation thereof: for Christ there, knowing all the Fathers secrets (as comming out of the bosome of the Father) intimates the contrary: where he makes one end of his prayer for them to be, *That the world may know, that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.* Now how he loved Christ is also shewed a little after; *For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world*: Therefore the Saints and Children of God are loved with an everlasting

Ioh. 17. 23.

Joh. 17. 24.

former

former love, not beginning at that inſtant diſcoverie thereof.

The Uſe heereof, is, firſt of all, againſt thoſe who meaſure Gods love and favour by their owne feeling, becauſe as God loved them before, ſo hee loves them as well and as dearely ſtill, when he hideth his face from them, as when hee ſuffered his loving kindneſſe to ſhine moſt comfortably upon them. Hee loved Chriſt as dearely when he hanged on the tree, in torment of ſoule and body, as hee did, when he ſaid, *This is my beloved ſonne, in whom I am well pleaſed*; yea and when hee received him up into glory. The Sunne ſhineth as cleerely in the darkeſt day, as it doth in the brighteſt. The difference is not in the Sunne, but in ſome clouds which hinder the manifeſtation of the light thereof. So God loveth us as well, when he ſhineth not in the brightneſſe of his countenance upon us, as when he doth. *Iob* was as much beloved of God in the middeſt of his miſeries, as he was afterwards when he came to enjoy the aboundance of his mercies. *Vſe.* 1. Mat. 3. 17. Iob 42. 7.

I will love them freely, &c.

The laſt Point which we gather from hence, as a ſpeciall ground of comfort, is this: *Obſerv.*

That this free love and favour of God, is the cauſe of all other mercies and free favours, whereby hee diſcovereth his love unto us.

1. It is the cauſe *of election, even ſo then at this preſent time alſo there is a remnant, according to the election of grace.* So 2. For *Vocation*: when Rom. 5. 11.

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the Apoſtle had ſhewed that the *Epheſians* were ſaved by *Grace*; hee adds, that in the ages to come, hee might ſhew the exceeding riches of his grace, *In his kindneſſe towards us through Chriſt Ieſus:* hee afterwards ſheweth, when this grace began firſt to have being, *For wee are his workemanſhip created vnto good workes, which God hath before ordained that wee ſhould walke therein.* 3. Forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, *In whom we have a redemption through his blood, even the forgiveneſſe of ſinns, according to the riches of his grace.* So 4. For the grace of Love: *Wee love him, becauſe he loved us firſt.* 5. For Juſtification, and Sanctification. It is ſaid, *that Chriſt hath loved us*, why? *For he hath waſhed us from our ſinnes in his owne blood*; and Saint *Iohn* ſaith, *He hath made us Kings and Prieſts unto God and his Father.* 1. Kings to fight againſt the world, the fleſh, and the divell. 2. Prieſts, to teach, inſtruct, reprove, and comfort our ſelves and others by the word of God: and then to offer up the ſacrifice of a broken heart, in prayers and praiſes. All comes from freedome of love. 6. So every good Inclination comes hence. *For it is God which worketh in us, both to will and to doe of his good pleaſure.* So 7. Every good Worke: *For we are his workemanſhip created in Chriſt Ieſus unto good workes, which he had before ordained that we ſhould walke therein: For by grace ye are ſaved* (ſaith he) *through faith.* So 8. For Eternall life: the Apoſtle ſheweth: *It is the gift of God, through Ieſus Chriſt our Lord.*

Ephe. 5. 7.

Ephe. 2. 10.

Ephe. 1. 7.

1 Joh. 4. 19.

Rev. 1. 5.

Hoſ. 5. 14. Phil. 1. 13.

Ephe. 2. 8. 10.

Rom. 6. 23.

This

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This ſhould teach us in the firſt place to bee humbled, in that we are ſo miſerable naughty ſervants, doing ſo little worke, nay nothing as we ſhould, yet ſhould have ſo good wages: *but God loves us freely*, &c. It ſhould rather humble us the more, then puffe us up in pride, in regard that there was nothing in us which might deſerve any thing at Gods hand. 1 Cor. 4.7. Epheſ. 2.9.

And hence alſo it followeth infallibly; that if he loved us from everlaſting with a free love, in a ſort, as he loved Chriſt, that therefore the effects of his love towards us ſhall never faile; as the Apoſtle ſheweth, *The gifts and calling of God, are without Repentance.* Faith and Repentance being fruits of his love wrought in us, ſhall hold out: therfore the weakeneſſe of theſe graces as they ſhall not hinder our ſalvation; no more ſhould they diſcourage us, or hinder the comfort of our profeſſion. Becauſe that Faith and Repentance which wee have, is not any worke of ours, but the worke of Gods free love in us: therefore they ſhall bee continued, and accepted. For our *Perſeverance* doth not ſtand in this, that wee have ſtrength in our ſelves to continue faithfull to God, but becauſe he out of his free love, continueth faithfull to us; and will never faile, nor forſake them whom he hath once taken into his everlaſting favour, on whom hee hath ſet his everlaſting free love, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes of Chriſt. *Who alſo ſhall confirme you unto the end, that yee may be blameleſſe in the day of our* *Vſe.* 2. Ioh. 17.23, 24. Rom. 11.29. 1 Cor. 1.8, 9.

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Lord Ieſus Chriſt: but upon what ground? *God is faithfull by whom wee were called unto the fellowſhip of his Sonne Ieſus Chriſt our Lord.* So that if any of the Elect ſhould fall away, God ſhould be unfaithfull. The caſe in *Perſeverance* is not how faithfull wee are, but how faithfull God is, who *guides us heere with his Counſell in all things, and afterwards receiveth us into glory.* So in another place, after the Apoſtle had prayed, *Now the very God of Peace Sanctifie you wholy; and I pray God your whole ſpirit, and ſoule and body bee preſerved blameleſſe unto the comming of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt.* What maketh he the ground of this his Prayer? *Faithfull is hee that calleth you, who alſo will doe it.*

Pſal. 73. 24.

1 Theſſ. 5. 23, 24.

Vſe. 3. If then wee would have God to manifeſt his free love to us, let us ſtrive to be obedient to his Commandements, and ſtirre up our hearts by all meanes to love him, who hath ſo freely loved us.

Queſt. Now how ſhould we manifeſt our love to God?

Anſw. *How to manifeſt our love to God.* First, in loving his Word: as *Pſal.* 19. & *Pſal.* 119. Secondly, in loving his people, 1 *Ioh.* 5. 1, 2. Thirdly, in longing for, and loving his ſecond comming, *Revel.* 22. 20.

Now followeth the Reaſon of the diſcoverie of this free love ſhewed now in time to them.

For mine Anger is turned away from him.

Here is the third Branch of Gods anſwer to their Petition, *Mine Anger is turned away from him:*

him: which is included and implied in the former; *I will heale their backſliding*: how could hee doe this if he were Angrie? No, ſhe ſaith, *I will love them freely*: which argues that his anger was appeaſed. God knoweth that variety of words and expreſſions are all little enough to raiſe up and comfort a doubting, wounded, galled ſoule: which when it is touched with a ſenſe of ſinne and of his diſpleaſure, cannot heare words enough of comfort. This God knowes well enough, and therefore hee adds expreſſion upon expreſſion: *I will heale their backſliding, I will love them freely, for mine Anger is turned away from him.* The ſoule which is touched with the ſenſe of wrath and defiled with the ſtaines of ſinnes dreadfull impreſſions, receives all this cheerefully, and more too: therfore in ſuch caſes, we muſt take in good part the largeneſſe of Gods expreſſions. *For mine Anger is turned away from him.* To unfold the words therefore.

Anger is the inward diſpleaſure which God hath againſt ſinne, and his purpoſe to puniſh it: accompanied with threatnings upon his purpoſe, and execution upon his threatnings. The point to be obſerved in the firſt place is, *Anger of God what.*

That there is Anger in God againſt ſin. *Obſerv.*

Wee need not ſtand to proove the point it is ſo manifeſt to every man, the Scripture is copious in it; if wee conſider either judgements executed upon ſinners: threatnings againſt ſin, or the Saints complaining of it, as *Pſal.* 74. 1.

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Iob 42.7. *Pſalme* 6.1. *Pſalme* 90. 11. *Pſalme* 38.1,3. *Iſa.*63.6. with many the like places proove, *That there is Anger in God againſt ſinne*; wee will rather ſee the Reaſon of it.

Reaſon.

Becauſe there is an Antipathie betwixt him and ſinne, which is contrarie to his pure nature. Sinne as it oppoſeth God, ſo it is contrarie unto him; and indeed, ſinne would turne him out of his ſoveraigntie. For what doth a man when hee ſinnes wittingly and willingly, but turne God out of his governement, and cauſes the divell to take up Gods roome in the heart? when a man gives way to ſinne, then the divell rules, and he thinkes his owne luſts better then Gods will, and his owne carnall reaſon in contriving of ſinne above Gods wiſedome in his Word: therefore hee is a proud Rebell. Sinne is ſuch a kinde of thing that it labours to take away God, for it not only puts him out of that part of his throne, mans heart, but for the time a man ſinnes, hee could wiſh there were no God to take vengeance of him. Can you wonder therefore that God is ſo oppoſite to that, which is ſo oppoſite to his Prerogative royall as ſinne is?

The effects of Gods Anger againſt ſin.

The truth is, God is Angry with nothing elſe but with ſinne, which is the onely object of his Anger. That which fooliſh perſons make a trifle and ſport of, Swearing, filthie ſpeaking and lying, is the object of Gods Anger. For this offence of ſinne, he did not ſpare the *Angels*

Pſal. 14.1.

2 Pet. 2.4.

gels of Heaven, but tumbled them thence, never to returne againe. Sin alſo thruſt *Adam* out of *Paradice*, and made God angry with him and the whole world, ſo as to deſtroy it with a flood of water; and will at laſt make him burne and conſume up all with a deluge of fire. Yea, it made him in a ſort angry with his owne deare Sonne, when hee under-went the puniſhment of ſinne, as our Surety: ſo that hee cried out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* If God thus ſhewed his anger againſt ſinne, in puniſhing it in Chriſt our Surety, who was made ſinne for us, and yet had no ſinne in himſelfe: how will he puniſh it much more in thoſe who are not in Chriſt: thoſe who ſtand in their owne ſinne and guilt, what will become of them? So that God is angry with ſin and with nothing elſe.

Gen. 3. 23.

Gen 6. 13. 2 Pet. 3. 12.

Mat 27 46.

The ſecond thing we gather from this, where he ſaith, *My Anger is turned away from him*, Gods Anger being taken eſpecially for judgements, is,

That Gods Anger is the ſpeciall thing in Afflictions.

Obſerv.

They come from his Anger, (as hath beene ſhewed) therefore hee ſaith, I will take mine Anger from you, whereby hee meanes judgements, the effect of his Anger. For in the Scriptures Anger is ordinarily taken for the fruits and effects of Gods Anger, which are terrible judgements, as we may ſee, *Deut.* 29. 20. and ſo in many other places.

Judge-

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Queſt.
Anſw.
That the leaſt croſſe, if ſet on by Anger prooves as the moſt terrible.

Judgements then are called Gods Anger.

Becauſe they iſſue from his Anger and diſpleaſure: for it is not the judgements, but the Anger in them, which lies heavie upon the ſoule; when they come from Gods Anger, they are intollerable to the conſcience, elſe when we ſuffer ill, knowing that it is not from Gods Anger, but for triall of our graces, or for exerciſe we beare it patiently. Therefore God ſaith, *mine Anger is turned away from him*, for this unremooved imbittereth every croſſe though it be never ſo ſmall. Let Gods Anger be upon a man, and he will make a conceit, a very ſight thing, to be as a heavie croſſe unto him, and vexe him both in body and ſtate, more then mightier croſſes at ſome other time ſhall. Will you ſee this in one inſtance, where God threatneth his owne deare people thus: *And the Lord will ſmite thee with the botch of Ægypt, and with the Emrods, and with the ſcab, and with the itch whereof thou canſt not be healed.* What is a ſcab, and an itch and the like ſuch a terrible judgement, which in theſe daies is ſet ſo light by? O yes, when it comes with Gods diſpleaſure, when the leaſt ſcratch is ſet on fire by Gods anger it ſhall conſume us, it prooves incurable, as there it is threatned: *whereof thou canſt not be healed.* When the vermine came in Gods Anger upon that hard-hearted King, all *Pharoahs* skill, and his *Magitians* skill, could not beate them out, becauſe (as they confeſſed) *this was the finger of God.* Let any thing come as a meſſen-

Deut. 28. 27.

Exod. 8. 9.

ger

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Levit 14.45, 46.

ger of Gods *Anger*, it comes with vengeance and ſticks to the ſoule, like a *fretting leproſie*, which when it entred into a houſe, many times could not be gotten out againe with pulling out ſtones, or ſcraping them, till the houſe were demoliſhed. So when Gods *Anger* is raiſed and kindled againſt a perſon, you may remoove this and that, change place and company, and uſe of helpes, yet it will never leave fretting till it have conſumed him, unleſſe it be removed by Repentance, if it be never ſo ſmall a ſcratch or itch, al the Phyſick in the world ſhal not cure it. For as the Love of God makes all other things in God comfortable unto us, ſo it is his Anger which makes al his Attributes terrible: as for his Power, the more he loves me, the more he is able to doe me good. But otherwiſe, the more he is Angry and diſpleaſed, the more his other Attributes are terrible. If he be Wiſe, the more hee will find out my ſinnes; if hee bee Powerfull, and angry, the more he can revenge himſelfe on me: is he Angry and Juſt; the more woe to me. So there is nothing in God when he is Angry, but it is ſo much the more terrible, for this puts a ſting in every thing: which when it is remooved out of malignant creatures armed with a ſting, then they are no more hurtfull. The ſting of every evill and croſſe is Gods Anger and wrath: this being remooved, nothing hurts, all croſſes then are gentle, milde, tractable and medicinall; when God hath once ſaid, *For mine Anger is turned away from him.*

After

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After that's gone, whatſoever remaineth is good for us, when we feele no Anger in it. What is that which blowes the coles of Hell, and makes Hell, Hell, but the Anger of God ceazing upon the conſcience, this kindles *Tophet*, and ſets it a fire like a river of Brimſtone. Therefore this is a wondrous ſweet comfort and incouragement when he ſaith, *For mine Anger is turned away from him.* Whence in the next place wee may obſerve,

Isa. 30. 33.

Obſerv. *That God will turne away his Anger upon Repentance.*

When there is this courſe taken (formerly mentioned) to turne unto the Lord & to ſue for pardon: to vow Reformation, *Aſſhur ſhall not ſave us*, and a through reformation of the particular ſinne; and when there is wrought in the heart faith to rely on Gods mercy, as the *Father of the Fatherleſſe*, in whom *they finde mercy*: then Gods Anger is turned away. *God upon Repentance will turne away his Anger.* The point is cleere, wee ſee when the Lord hath threatned many grievous judgements and plagues for for ſinne, one upon the neck of another, denounced with all variety of expreſſions in the moſt terrible manner: yet after all that thundering, *Deut.* 28. & 29. It followes, *And it ſhall come to paſſe when all theſe things are come upon thee; the Bleſſings and the Curſes which I have ſet before thee: and thou ſhalt call them to minde among all the nations whether the Lord thy God hath driven thee: and ſhalt returne unto the*

Deut 30. 1, 2, 3

Lord

Lord thy God, &c. *That then the Lord thy God will turne thy Captivity, and have compaſſion upon thee*, &c. After Repentance, you ſee the promiſe comes preſently after: not that the one is the meritorious cauſe of the other; but there is an order of things, God will have the one come with the other: where there is not ſence of ſinne and humiliation, and thence prayer to God for pardon, with reformation and truſting in his Mercy; there the anger of God abides ſtill. But where theſe are, *His anger is turned away*. God hath eſtabliſhed his order, that the one of theſe muſt ſtill follow the other.

Another excellent place to the fore-named, wee have in the Chronicles. *If my people that are called by my Name, ſhall humble themſelves and pray*: (as they did here in this Chapter *Take words vnto your ſelves*) *and ſeeke my face, and turne from their wicked wayes*: As they did here, *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, we will not ride upon horſes* &c. We will no more rely on the barren falſe helps of forraine ſtrength, what then? *I will heare from Heaven, and will forgive their ſinne, and will heale their land*. Here is the promiſe, whereof this text is a proofe, ſo in all the Prophets there is a multiplication of the like inſtances and promiſes; which wee will not ſtand upon now, as not being controverſiall. It is Gods name ſo to doe, as wee may ſee in that well-knowne place of *Exodus*. *Iehovah, Iehovah, God, Merciſull, and Gratious, Long*

2 Chro. 7. 14.

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Exo. 34.6.7.

Long ſuffering and abundant in goodneſſe, and Truth; keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity and tranſgreſſion, and ſinne, &c. And ſo it is ſaid, At what time ſo ever a ſinner repents himſelfe of his ſinnes from the bottome of his heart, I will put all his ſinnes out of my remembrance, ſaith the Lord God. The Scripture is plentifull in nothing more, eſpecially, it is the burthen of *Eze.* 18, and .33. forgiveneſſe of ſinnes and remoovall of wrath upon repentance.

And for *Examples:* ſee one for all the reſt, let the greater include the leſſer. *Manaſſeth* was a greater ſinner then any of us all can bee, becauſe hee was inabled with a greater authority to doe miſcheefe, all which no private man, or ordinarie great man is capable of, not having the like power, which he exerciſed to the full in all manner of cruelty, joyned with other groſſe and deadly ſinnes, and yet the Scripture ſhewes, that upon his humiliation, and praying hee found mercie: God turned away his anger.

2 Chr. 33.12. 13.

That of the *Prodigall*, is a parable alſo fitted for this purpoſe; who had no ſooner a Reſolution to returne to his Father. *Filius timet convitium,* &c. The ſonne feares chiding; the father provides a banquet. So God doth tranſcend our thoughts in that kinde: wee can no ſooner humble our ſelves to pray to him heartily, reſolving to amend our wayes, and come to him, but hee layes his anger a ſide to entertaine

Luk. 15.

...raine tearmes of love and friendship with us.
As wee see in *David*, who was a good man, [illegible]
though he flubbered over the matter of Repen-
tance, all which while Gods hand was in hea-
vie upon him, that [illegible]
to the drought of Summer, [illegible]
long. But when once her deale throughly in
the humble and resolved [illegible]
transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest
the iniquity of my sinne. Let our humiliation
be reall and through, with a true detestation
and purpose to reforme, and assuredly God
will shew mercy.

The [illegible]
were it so, for his Nature is unchangeable to
mercy, remember: For him to destroy, it is
[illegible] upon [illegible] of our sinnes, but to re-
mercifull and gracious, it proceeds
from his owne bowels, without [illegible]
ances or motives, [illegible]
mercifull unto whom he will shew mercy. King. 19. 30.
When a Godly [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[

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Exo. 34. 6. 7.

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The Reaſon is cleere, *Becauſe it is his Nature ſo to doe*: his Nature is more inclined to mercy then anger: For him to be angrie, it is ſtill upon ſuppoſition of our ſinnes. But to be mercifull and gratious, it alwayes proceedes from his owne bowels, whether wee be ſinners or not; without all ſuppoſition God is ſtill mercifull unto whom he will ſhew mercy. *Who is a God like unto thee* (ſaith the Prophet) *that pardoneth iniquity, and paſſeth by the tranſgreſſion of the remnant of his heritage, hee retaineth not his anger for ever; becauſe he delighteth in mercy*. Things naturall come eaſily, without paine, as beames from the Sunne, water from the Spring, and as heate from fire: all which come eaſily, becauſe they are naturall. So mercy and love from God, come eaſily and willingly: it is his nature to bee gratious and mercifull. Though we be ſinners, If wee take this *Reaſon.* Micah.7.18.

courſe

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Exo. 34. 6. 7.

Long suffering and abundant in goodnesse, and Truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and sinne, &c. And so it is said, At what time so ever a sinner repents himselfe of his sinnes from the bottome of his heart, I will put all his sinnes out of my remembrance, saith the Lord God. The Scripture is plentifull in nothing more, especially, it is the burthen of *Eze.* 18, and .33. forgiveneſse of sinnes and remoovall of wrath upon repentance.

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courſe heere (as the Church doth) to pray and be humbled; then it will follow, *Mine anger is turned away from him.* The *Vſe* is,

Vſe.

Firſt, to obſerve Gods Truth in the performance of his gratious promiſe, who as he makes gratious promiſes to us, ſo he makes them good His Promiſe is, if wee confeſſe our ſinnes hee will forgive them and be mercifull: ſo heere he ſayes, *mine Anger is turned away.* As they confeſſe, ſo hee is mercifull to forgive them. It is good to obſerve the experiments of Gods truth. Every word of God is a ſhield, that is, wee may take it as a ſhield. It is an experimentall truth whereby we may arme our ſoules. This is an experimentall truth, that when wee are humbled for our ſinnes, God hee will bee mercifull unto our ſinnes, and allay his anger; as it is in this text. Therefore it is ſaid, *Thoſe that know thy name will truſt in thee, for thou never faileſt thoſe who put their truſt in thee.* Let us then open our hearts unto God, and confeſſe our ſinnes unto him, and if wee reſolve amendment, wee ſhall finde the truth of his gratious promiſes, hee will turne aſide his anger, and will never faile us if wee put our truſt in him. *The name of the Lord is a ſtrong tower, and the righteous fly to it and are ſafe.* This name of mercy, grace, and favour, is a ſtrong tower to diſtreſſed conſciences, let us therefore remember to fly unto it when our conſciences are awaked and diſtreſſed with ſinne, and ſence of Gods diſpleaſure. Seeing theſe kinds of

Pro 28.13.

Pro. 30.5.

Pſal. 9.10.

Pro. 18.10.

promiſes

promiſes are as a citie of refuge, let us runne unto them, and wee ſhall not bee puld from the hornes of this altar; as *Ioab* once was from his: but ſhall at all times finde grace and mercy to helpe us at the time of neede: it is a comfortable Point. *Mine anger is turned away from him.*

But it may bee ſaid, How is Gods anger turned away from his children, when they feele it oft-times after in the courſe of their lives. *Queſt.*

The anſwer is, that there is a double *Anger* of God, whereby wee muſt judge of things, for, either it is *Anſw.*

1. *Vindicative*, or } *Anger.*
2. *Fatherly*------ }

God after our firſt converſion he remooveth his *Vindicative anger*; after which though ſometimes hee threaten and frowne upon us, yet it is with a *Fatherly anger*: which God alſo removes with the ſhame and correction attending it, when wee reforme and amend our wicked wayes. *How anger felt, may yet be ſaid to be removed.*

There is

1. *A Child of Anger.*
2. *A Child under Anger.*

Gods Children are never children of wrath and anger, after their firſt converſion; but ſometimes children under wrath, if they make bold with ſinne, ſo as they cannot uſe their right of ſonſhip to go boldly to the throne of grace; becauſe then, (though they have the right of ſons) they conceive of God, as angry with them; and cannot uſe it ſo long as they live in any ſinne

againſt conſcience, and ſo continue, untill they reforme and humble themſelves (as the Church doth heere) after which they can and doe rejoyce againe, claime their right, and are not either children of wrath, or under wrath. *David* after he had ſinned that foule ſinne, was a child under wrath, not a child of wrath. So if wee make bold to ſinne we are children under wrath: for oft-times God begins correction at his owne houſe, if there be any diſorder there. You know God was ſo angry with *Moſes*, that he was not ſuffered to enter into the land of *Canaan*. And *David* when he had numbred the people, God was angry with him, and with the *Corinthians* alſo for unreverent receiving of the Lords-ſupper. But here is a courſe preſcribed to remove his fatherly anger, and to enjoy the beames of his countenance and Sun-ſhine of his favour in Chriſt: if we humble our ſelves, confeſſe our ſinnes and fly unto him as the Church heere doth: then we ſhall finde this made good: *For mine Anger is turned away from him.* But it may be asked,

1 Pet. 4 17.
Num 20. 12.
2 Sam. 24. 1.
1 Cor. 11. 30.

Queſt. In times of affliction how may wee know Gods Anger to bee remooved, when yet wee endure the affliction?

Anſw. The anſwer is, that God is infinitely wiſe, and in one affliction hath many ends, as

1. When he afflicts them, it is to correct them for their ſinnes: after which when they have puld out the ſting of ſinne by confeſſion and humiliation, if afflictions continue, his anger doth not continue.

2. Afflicti-

2. Affliction ſometimes is for an exerciſe of Patience and Faith, and tryall of their graces; and for the exemplarie manifeſtation to others of Gods goodneſſe to them.

But even then they may know that things come not in anger unto them, by this, that after Repentance God ſpeakes peace unto their conſcience; ſo that, though the grievance continue, it is with much joy in the Holy Ghoſt, and peace of conſcience, in which caſe, the ſoule knowes that it is for other ends that God continues it. Therefore the firſt thing in any affliction is to remoove away the coare and ſting thereof by humbling our ſelves, as the Church here doth. After which our conſciences will be at peace for other things God hath many ends in correcting us: he will humble us, improove our afflictions to the good of others; and will gaine himſelfe honour by our afflictions, ſufferings, and croſſes. When God hath ſhed abroad his love in our hearts by his Spirit, then wee can rejoyce in tribulation, and rejoyce under hope, though the affliction continue, becauſe the ſting is gone, anger is remooved.

How to know afflictions are not in wrath theugh they continue.

Rom 5.5.

For mine anger is turned away from him.

The laſt Point we obſerve from hence, and gather from all theſe generall truths is, this,

Where there is not Humiliation for ſinne, and hearty Prayer to God, with reformation of our wayes, flying unto God for mercy (who is mercifull to the Fatherleſſe) there Gods wrath continues.

Obſerv.

For as where they are performed his anger

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is turned away: ſo muſt it needs follow, that where they are not performed his anger continueth. Therefore, let us examine our ſelves; The Spirit of God here ſpeakes of *healing backeſlidings*, and of *turning away iniquity*; let us looke well to our ſelves, and to the preſent ſtate of things, that our diſeaſes be ſoundly cured, our perſonall diſeaſes, and then let us be ſenſible of the diſeaſes of the land and pray for them: for there are univerſall diſeaſes and ſinnes of a kingdome as well as perſonall. And we are guilty of the ſinnes of the times, as farre as we are not humbled for them. *Paul* tels thoſe who did not puniſh the inceſtuous perſon, *Why are yee not humbled rather for this deed?* Where there is a publicke diſeaſe, there is a publicke anger hanging over upon that diſeaſe, the cure whereof is here preſcribed: to be humbled as for our ſelves ſo for others. Therefore let us beware of ſinne, if we would ſhun wrath, eſpecially of Idolatry, or els we ſhall be ſure to ſmart for it, as *Ephraim* did, of whom the Spirit of God ſaith: *When Ephraim ſpake trembling; he exalted himſelfe in Iſrael: but when he offended in Baall he dyed.* Ephraim had got ſuch authority, what with his former victories, and by the ſignes of Gods favour among them, that when he ſpake, *there was trembling*, and he *exalted himſelfe in Iſrael.* But when he *offended once in Baall*, that is when he became an Idolater, *he dyed.* It is meant of the *civill death* eſpecially; that he loſt his former credit and reputation. We ſee then the dangerous

1 Cor. 5. 2.

Hoſ. 13. 1.

gerous effects of ſinne, eſpecially of Idolatrie, wherfore let us fortifie our ſelves againſt it: and bleſſe God that wee live under ſuch a gratious, juſt, and milde King, and good government, where there are ſuch lawes againſt this great ſin eſpecially; and beſeech God long to continue his life and proſperity for our good amongſt us. For Vſe then,

Vſe. Remember, when we are to deale with God, that he is the great moover of all things, who if he be angry, can overturne all things, and croſſe us in all things: and can alſo heale us of all our diſeaſes. But what muſt we doe if wee would be healed? We muſt take the courſe preſcribed here. *Take unto us words*, humble our ſelves, and have no confidence in *Aſhur*, munition, people; or in *the worke of our hands*: but truſt in God, ſo ſhall we, be happy and bleſſed. Whatſoever our enemies be; yet if wee can make God our rocke, fortreſſe and ſhield, then it is no matter who be our enemies. *If hee be on our ſide who can be againſt us?* Let us all (Miniſters and all) reforme our ſelves, and ſtand in the gap, after the courſe here preſcribed: and goe to God in a right manner, ſo wee may diſſipate all the clouds of anger which may ſeeme to hang over our heads, and finde God experimentally making this promiſe good to us, which he made then to his people: *I will heale their backeſliding, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from him.* Rom. 8. 31.

A certaine way to ſhun anger. Therefore let us doe as *Iaacob* did with *Eſaw*, when

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when he came incenſed with mighty diſpleaſure againſt his brother *Iaakob* comes before him humbly, proſtrates himſelfe before him; and ſo turnes away his anger. So when God is angry with us, and comes againſt us, let us humble our ſelves before him, to appeaſe him: as
Gen.33.3,4. 1 Sam.25.23. *Abigail* quieted *David* by humbling her ſelfe before him, when he had a purpoſe to deſtroy her family. So let us come before God in humility of ſoule, and God will turne away his anger. As when there was a great plague begun in the armie, *Aaron* ſtood with his *cenſer* betwixt the living and the dead, offering incenſe and making attonement for them, whereby the plague was ſtayed. So in any wrath felt or feared, for our ſelves, or the ſtate we live in: let every one hold his cenſure and offer the incenſe of prayer; *Take with you words.* God is wondrouſly mooved to pitty, by the incenſe of theſe ſweet odours offered up by Chriſt unto the Father, beleeve it, it is the only ſafe courſe to begin in heaven, ſuch a beginning will have a bleſſed ending, other courſes, politique and ſubordinate helps muſt alſo be taken, but all is to no purpoſe unleſſe we beginne in heaven: becauſe all things under God are ruled and mooved by him; who when he is favourable makes all the creatures pliable unto us; but eſpecially makes this good; *I will heale their backſliding, I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from him.*

Num.16.48. Revel.8.4.

The end of the ſixt Sermon.

THE SEVENTH SERMON.

Hos. 14. 5.

I will be as the Dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the Lillie, and cast forth his Roote as Lebanon.

His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the Olive tree and his smell as Lebanon.

THE Church (as wee heard) had beene humbled, and therefore is comforted: it is usuall in the Scriptures, especially in the Prophetical partsthereof, after terrible threatnings to come with sweet promises: because God in all ages hath

Ioel. 2. 27, 28.
Hos. 30. 14. 15.
Isa. 18, 19.
Deu. 3. 1.
Ier. 3. 12.
Jer. 30. 1.

hath a Church. Therefore God in this Chapter takes this courſe, he makes gratious promiſes to this people, grounded upon the former part of the Chapter, wherein God had dictated unto them a forme of Prayer, Repentance, and Reformation. *Take with you words and turne to the Lord, ſay unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us gratiouſly*, &c. Whereupon a Reformation is promiſed, *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us, wee will not ride upon horſes*, &c. Which was a reformation of that nationall ſinne which they were guilty of, *falſe Confidence*. Now (as we have heard) God anſwers them to every particular. He makes a gratious promiſe, *That he will heale their backeſliding*, according to their Prayer, *Take away all iniquity*, and to that, *Receive us gratiouſly*, hee anſwers, *I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from him.*

Now it cannot bee but that God ſhould regard the deſires of his owne Spirit, when both the words and Spirit proceed from him, therefore he goes on more fully to anſwer their deſire of *doing good to them*: ſaying,

I will be as the Dew to Iſraell, &c.

In which words the holy Prophet, doth firſt by a *Metaphar* and borrowed ſpeech ſet downe the ground of all happineſſe. So that there is here given a more full ſatisfaction to the deſires of the Church.

1. *The cauſe of all*, (*I will be as the Dew*) &c.
2. *The particular Perſons to whom*: (*to Iſraell.*)
3. *The fruit of this followes*: (*he ſhall grow as the*

the Lillie, and cast forth his roote as Lebanon.

Now the words read are a fuller satisfaction to the desires of Gods people, which were stirred up by his owne Spirit. *I will be as the Dew unto Israell*, where,

1. You have set downe, *The cause of all*, which followes: *God by his gratious Spirit will bee as the Dew unto Israell.*

2. And then upon that, the prosperous successe this *Dew* of Gods Spirits hath in them, *They shall grow as the Lillie.*

Object. 1. But the *Lilly* growes, but hath no stability: every thing that growes is not well rooted. Therefore, hee adds in the second place, *They shall cast out their rootes as Lebanon*, that is, with growth they shall have stability: not onely grow in hight speedily, but also grow fast in the roote with firmenesse.

Object. 2. And likewise, as every thing that growes in roote and firmnesse doth not spread it selfe, hee sayes he shall not only grow upward, and take roote downe-wards, *But his branches shall spread*; whereby hee shall bee more fruitfull and comfortable to others.

Object. 3. O! but every thing that growes, is rooted and spreads, is not for all that fruitfull: therefore hee saith, they shall be as the *Olive tree, his beauty shall be as the Olive tree for fruitfulnesse.*

Object. 4. Yet, though the Olive bee fruitfull, it hath no pleasant smell, nor good taste, therefore hee adds another blessing to that: they shall in regard of their pleasantnesse to God and man, that shall

ſhall delight in them, be *as the ſmell of Lebanon.* Which was a wondrous pleaſant delightfull place, which yeelded a pleaſant ſavour round about. So wee ſee what a compleate kinde of growth this is: wherein bleſſing upon bleſſing is promiſed, the Holy Ghoſt cannot enough ſatisfie himſelfe in varietie of comfortable expreſſions. Nothing is left unſatisfied that the heart can propound. Hee will make them *grow*, be *ſtedfaſt, fruitfull, delightfull, and pleaſant.* So that we have here to conſider.

1. *The favour and bleſſing that he promiſeth*, to be as the *dew to Iſraell.*

2. *The excellency of it, in divers particulars.*

3. *The order wherein it is promiſed.*

Before we come to the wordes themſelves, if we remember and read over the former part of the prophecie, we ſhall find it full of terrible curſes; all oppoſite unto that here promiſed, to ſhew,

Obſerv. *Wee can never be in ſo diſconſolate a ſtate, but God can alter all.*

That God hath a ſalve for all ſores. He hath a right hand as well as a left, *Bleſſings* as well as *Curſes: Mercie* as well as *Iuſtice*; which is more proper to his nature then that. Therefore, let Chriſtian ſoules never be diſcouraged with their condition and ſtate whatſoever it is.

Reaſon. Eccleſ. 7. 14. For, as there are many maladies, ſo there are many remedies oppoſite to them; as *Salomon* ſaith, *This is ſet over againſt that*, &c. If there be a thouſand kinds of ills, there are many thouſand kindes

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Zach. 1 19,20, 21.

kindes of remedies. For, God is larger in his helpes, then we can be in our diſeaſes and diſtreſſes, whatſoever they are: therefore it is good to make this uſe of it. To be ſo conceited of God as may draw us neerer unto him upon all occaſions.

Vſe.

Againe, We ſee here; how large the Spirit of God is in expreſſions of the particulars: *I will be as the dew unto Iſraell, and hee ſhall grow as the Lilly: and caſt forth his rootes as Lebanon: his branches ſhall ſpread, and his beauty be large*, &c. Whereunto tends all this largeneſſe of expreſſion? God doth it in mercy unto us, who eſpecially need it, being in a diſtreſſed, diſconſolate eſtate. Therefore they are not words waſtfully ſpent; we may marvaile ſometimes in *Iſaiah*, and ſo in ſome other Prophets, to ſee the ſame things in ſubſtance ſo often repeated (though with variety of lively expreſſions) as it is (for the moſt part) the manner of every Prophet? Surely, becauſe it is uſefull and profitable, the people of God need it. There is, nor never was any man in a drouping ſinking condition, but he deſires line upon line, word upon word, promiſe upon promiſe, expreſſion upon expreſſion.

1.

Object. *One would thinke, is not a word of God ſufficient?*

Anſw. Yes, for him, but not for us; we have doubting and drouping hearts, and therefore God adds Sacraments and Seales, not onely one Sacrament, but two: and in the Sacrament, not onely Bread, but Wine alſo: to ſhew that Chriſt

Christ is all in all. What large expressions are here thinks a prophane heart, what needs this. As if God knew us not better then we know our selves. Whensoever thou art touched in conscience with the sence of thy sinnes, and knowest how great, how powerfull, how Holy a God thou hast to deale with, who can indure no impure thing, thou wilt never find fault with his large expressions in his Word and Sacraments; and with the variety of his promises, when hee translates out of the booke of nature into his owne booke, all expressions of excellent things to spread forth his mercy and love. Is this needlesse? No, we need all, he that made us, redeemed us, preserves us, knowes us better then we our selves, he who is infinite in wisedome and love, takes this course.

And marke againe in the next place, how the Holy Ghost fetcheth here this comfort from things that are most excellent in their kinde. *They shall grow as the Lillie*, that growes fairely and speedily: *And they shall take roote as Lebanon*; to shew that a Christian should be the excellentest in his kinde, he compares him in his right temper and state, to the most excellent things in nature. To the *Sunne*, to *Lions*, *Trees of Lebanon*, *Cedars*, and *Olive Trees* for fruitfullnesse: and all to shew, that a Christian should not be an ordinary man. All the excellencies of nature are little enough to set out the excellency of a Christian; he must be an extraordinary singular man. Saith Christ, *What singular*

thing

thing doe yee? He muſt not be a common man. Therefore, when God would raiſe his people, he tells them, they ſhould not be common men, but grow as *Lillies*, be rooted as *Trees*, fruitfull as *olives*, and pleaſant beautifull, as the goodly ſweet-ſmelling trees of *Libanus*. How gratiouſly doth God condeſcend unto us, to teach us by outward things, how to helpe our ſoules by our ſenſes: that when we ſee the growth, fruitfulneſſe, and ſweetneſſe of other things; we ſhould call to mind what we ſhould be, and what God hath promiſed we ſhall be, if we take this courſe and order formerly preſcribed. Indeed a wiſe Chriſtian indowed with the Spirit of God, extracts a quinteſſence out of every thing; eſpecially from thoſe that God ſingles out to teach him his duty by, when he lookes upon any plant, fruite, or tree that is pleaſant, delightfull, and fruitfull, it ſhould put him in minde of his duty.

I will be as the dew to Iſraell, &c.

Theſe ſweet promiſes in their order follow immediately upon this, that God would freely love them, and ceaſe to be angry with them: then he adds the fruits of his love to their ſoules, and the effects of thoſe fruits in many particulars, whence firſt of all we obſerve,

Gods love is a fruitfull love. *Obſerv.*

Whereſoever he loves, he makes the things lovely: we ſee things lovely, and then we love them: but God ſo loves us, that in loving us he makes us lovely. So ſaith God by the Prophet,

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I have ſeene his wayes and will heale him: I will lead him alſo and reſtore comforts unto him, and to his mourners. And from this experience of the fruitfulneſſe of Gods love, the Church is brought in rejoycing. *I will greatly rejoyce in the Lord; my ſoule ſhall be joyfull in my God: for hee hath cloathed mee with the garments of ſalvation; hee hath covered mee with the robe of righteouſneſſe: as a bridegroome decketh himſelfe with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth her ſelfe with her jewels.* Thus he makes us ſuch as may be aimeable objects of his love, that he may delight in.

Ezek 16.9,13. Iſa.57 18.

Jſa 61.10.

Reaſon. For his love is the love, as of a gratious ſo of a powerfull God, that can alter all things to us, and us to all things; he can bring us good out of every thing, and doe us good at all times, according to the Churches Prayer: *Doe good unto us.*

Vſe. Wherefore ſeeing God can doe us good, and ſince his love is not only a pardoning love, to take away his anger; but alſo ſo compleat and fruitfull a love, ſo full of ſpirituall favours: *I will be as the dew unto Iſraell: and hee ſhall grow up as the Lillie*, &c. Let us ſtand more upon Gods love then we have formerly done, and ſtrive to have our hearts inflamed with love towards God againe. As the Prophet *David* doth: *I love the Lord, becauſe hee hath heard my voice and my ſupplications.* It may be for outward condition, that even where God loves they may goe backewards ſo and ſo: but for their beſt part their ſoules, God will be *as the*

Pſa.116 1.

dew

Dew to them; and *they ſhall grow as Lebanon.* God will bee good to them in the beſt things. And a Chriſtian when he begins to know what the beſt things are concerning a better life: he then learneth to valew ſpirituall bleſſings and favours above all other whatſoever. Therfore, God ſuits his promiſes to the deſires of his children; that he would water their drie ſoules, that he would be as the dew unto them. Gods love is a fruitfull love, and fruitfull in the beſt things. As we know what *David* ſaith: *There be many who ſay, who will ſhew us any good, Lord lift thou up the light of thy Countenance upon us. Thou haſt put gladneſſe in my heart, more then in the time that their corne, and their wine increaſed.* So God fits his gratious promiſe anſwerable to the deſires of a gratious heart. Pſa 4.6,7.

I will be as the Dew to Iſraell.

To come to the words in particular, for this is the ground of all that followes, *I will be as the Dew unto Iſraell.*

2.
The excellencies of Dew in divers particulars.

How will God be as the Dew to Iſraell?

Queſt.

This is eſpecially meant of and performed to the Church under the New Teſtament, eſpecially next unto Chriſts time; when the Dew of grace fell in greateſt aboundance upon the Church. The Comfortable, Sanctifying, Fruitfull Grace of God is compared to *Dew* in many reſpects.

Anſw.

Why the Grace of God is compared to Dew.

1.
Becauſe it comes freely from God.

First, *The Dew doth come from above.* God ſends it, it drops from above and cannot bee commanded

commanded by the creature. So all other gifts and eſpecially this perfect gift, the Grace of God, comes from above, from the Father of lights: there is no principle of grace naturally within a man. It is as childiſh to think that Grace comes from any principle within us, as to thinke that the dew which fals upon a ſtone is the ſweat of the ſtone: as children think that the ſtone ſweats, when it is the dew that's fallen upon it. Certainely our hearts in regard of themſelves are barren and dry: wherfore Gods Grace, in regard of the Originall, is compared to *Dew*, which ſhould teach us to go to God, as the Church doth here, and pray him to deale gratiouſly with us, to do good to us, for this cauſe laying open our ſoules unto him, to ſhed his Grace into them.

Grace comes inſenſibly and inviſibly.

Thirdly, *The Dew doth fall Inſenſibly and Inviſibly.* So the Grace of God, wee feele the comfort, ſweetneſſe and operation of it, but it fals inſenſibly without obſervation. Inferiour things heere feele the ſweet and comfortable influence of the Heavens, but who ſees the active influence upon them, which how it is derived from ſuperiour bodies to the inferiour is not obſervable: as our Saviour ſpeakes of the beginnings of grace and workings of it. *The winde bloweth where it liſteth, and thou heareſt the ſound thereof, but canſt not tell whence it commeth, or whether it goeth: ſo is every one that is borne of the Spirit.* Joh. 3. 8. It workes we know not how: we feele the worke, but the manner of working is unknowne to us. Grace therefore is wrought undiſcer-

undiſcernably. No man can ſee the converſion of another, nay no man allmoſt can diſceme his owne converſion at firſt; Therefore this Queſtion ſhould not much trouble you; ſhew us the firſt houre, the firſt time of your converſion and entrance into the ſtate of grace. Grace (to many) *falls like the dew*, by little and little, drop and drop, line upon line, it falls ſweetly and undiſcernably upon them at the firſt. Therefore, it is hard to ſet downe the firſt time, ſeeing (as our bleſſed Saviour ſpeakes) grace at the firſt is wondrous little, likened to a graine of Muſtard-ſeed. But though it be ſmall at firſt, yet nothing is more glorious and beautifull afterwards, for from a ſmall ſeed, it growes to over-ſpread and be great, ſhooting out branches. And as the roote of *Ieſſe* was a deſpiſed ſtock and in ſhew a dead roote, yet thence Chriſt roſe, a branch as high as Heaven. So the beginning of a Chriſtian, is deſpiſed and little, like a dead ſtocke as it were, but they grow upward and upward ſtill, till they come to Heaven it ſelfe. Thus we ſee there is nothing in the world more undiſcernable in the beginning then the worke of grace, which muſt make us not over-curious to examine exactly the firſt beginnings thereof, becauſe it is as the falling of the *Dew* or *the blowing of the winde*.

Mark. 4. 31, 32.

Pro. 4. 18.

Againe, as it fals undiſcernably and inviſibly, ſo *very ſweetly and mildly*, not violating the nature or courſe of any thing, but rather helping and cheriſhing the ſame, or if it make any chang

Grace workes ſweetly and mildly upon the ſoule.

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in any thing, it doth it mildly and gently. So uſually (unleſſe it be in ſome extraordinary caſe) God workes upon the ſoule by his grace mildly and ſweetly: Grace works ſweetly upon the ſoule, preſerving its freedome, ſo as man when he begins to be good ſhall be freely good from inward principles wrought in him. His judgment ſhall like the courſe hee takes, and be cleane oppoſite to others that are contrary, from an inward principle, as free now in altering his courſe as formerly he was in following the other. There is no violence but in regard of corruption. God works ſtrongly and mildly; ſtrongly for he changeth a ſtone into a fleſhie heart, and yet ſweetly, he breakes not any power of nature, but advanceth it: for grace doth not take away or impriſon nature, but lift it up and ſet it at liberty: for it makes the will ſtronger and freer, the judgment ſounder, the underſtanding cleerer, the affections more orderly, it makes all things better, ſo that no violence is offered to nature.

5. Againe Grace is compared to *Dew, In regard of the Operations of Dew*. For what effects hath *Dew* upon the earth? firſt it cooles the ayre when it fals, and then with cooleneſſe it hath a fructifying vertue: for falling eſpecially on tender hearbs and plants, it ſoakes into the roote of them, and makes them fruitfull. So it is with the Grace of Gods Spirit, it cooles the ſoule ſcorched with the ſenſe of Gods Anger, as indeed all our ſoules will be (when we have to deale

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Heb 12.29.

deale with God who is *a conſuming fire)* till we take that courſe to looke upon him in Chriſt for the pardon of ſinne: after which his Grace and the ſenſe of it cooleth, aſſwageth, and ſpeakes peace to an uncomfortable, diſconſolate heart. This voice, *Sonne be of good comfort, thy ſins are forgiven thee*, O! this hath a cooling in it: and this alſo, *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Parradice*, O! how it cooled and chered the good theefe, and comforted him. And ſo when God ſayes unto the ſoule, *I am thy Salvation*, O! when the ſoule feeles this, how is it cooled and refreſhed?

1. *Grace like dew is a cooler.*

And the ſoule is not onely cooled and refreſhed, but, *It is alſo ſweetned and made fruitfull with comfort to the ſoule.* If we were to ſee a man in the pangs of conſcience, ſtung with fiery temptations, as with ſo many fiery ſerpents and poyſoned darts, which drinke up the ſpirits, and preſents God a conſuming fire, and Hel beneath full of inſupportable torments ſet on by the inſupportable wrath of God: then we ſhould know what it were to have grace in this efficatious manner, cooling and refreſhing the ſoule that hath theſe fiery darts ſtuck into it of violent ſtrong temptations, which to the preſent ſenſe, are the flaſhes and beginnings of Hell. O! It is an excellent thing to have the Grace of God in ſuch a caſe to aſſwage and coole the maladies of a diſtreſſed ſoule, which for the preſent ſeemes to burn in a flame of wrath. As it cooles, ſo alſo it makes the heart fruitful, our hearts of themſelves

2. *Grace fructifieth as dew doth.*

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being as the barren wildernes and wild deſert. Now God by his grace turnes the wildernes into water ſprings, as it appeareth in many places of the Prophets. Saith God: *For I will powre water upon him that is thirſtie, and floods upon the drie ground, I will powre my Spirit upon thy ſeed,* &c. So Grace it turnes the barren wilderneſſe, the heart drie of it ſelfe, and makes it fruitfull. Wee know what *Paul* ſaid of *Oneſimus*, a fruitleſſe ſervant, nay a fugitive theefe; he is unfruitfull no longer (ſaith he) now that he is become a convert, another, a new man, now he will doe good ſervice. A man is no ſooner altered by the dew of grace, but howſoever formerly he were a naughtie hurtfull perſon, of whom every man was affraid, becauſe of his wickedneſſe, yet now he is a fruitfull perſon, and ſtrives to bring forth fruits worthy of amendment of life.

Pſal. 107 33, 34.

Iſa. 44 3. Iſa. 45 8.

Philem. 16.

Mat. 3. 8.

6. *Grace is unreſiſtible.*

And we may adde one more in the next place, *in regard of the unreſiſtibleneſſe thereof*; for as nothing can hinder the *dew* from falling from the ſweet influence of Heaven unto us, or hinder the working of thoſe ſuperiour bodies upon the inferiour, or hinder the wind from blowing: ſo, who can hinder Gods Grace? they may out of malice hinder the meanes of it, and hinder the gratious working of the Spirit, by diſcouragements in others: which is a ſigne of a diveliſh ſpirit, when yet God hath a hand in that too after a ſort. For it raineth in one citie and not in another by Gods appointment, but nothing can

Iob. 38 37.

can hinder where God will have the dew and water and ſhine of the influence of grace worke, nothing in the world can ſtop it. So it is ſaid in that excellent Propheſie of Chriſt, and his kingdome. *Hee ſhall come downe like raine upon the mowen graſſe: as ſhowers that water the Earth, which as they coole and fructifie, ſo come they unreſiſtibly.* Pſal. 72. 6.

Vſe. Let none therefore be diſcouraged with the deadneſſe, drieneſſe, and barrenneſſe of their owne hearts: but let them know that God doth gratiouſly promiſe (if they will take the courſe formerly ſet downe) to be, *as the dew unto them.* Therefore let them come unto the ordinances of God with wondrous hope, confidence and faith, that he will be as *dew* unto them, that ſeeing he hath appointed variety of ordinances; the Word and Sacraments, he will bleſſe thoſe meanes of his owne ordaining and appointing, for his owne ends. He that hath gratiouſly appointed ſuch meanes of grace, will he not bleſſe them? eſpecially having promiſed; *I will be as the dew unto Iſraell.* Therefore let us attend upon the ordinances, and not keepe away though our hearts be barren, drie and unfruitfull: God is above the heart, and able to turne the wilderneſſe into a fruitfull place: he can make the heart a fit habitation for himſelfe to dwell in. Let us by faith attend upon the ordinances, if we find not comfort in one ordinance, let us go unto another, and another, comfort and help ſhall come, eſpecially, if with the Church, we go Cant. 3. 4.

Againſt diſcouragement in regard of our barrennes in goodneſſe.

go a little further. For the promiſe is, *I will be as the dew unto Iſraell.*

3. The order of Gods Promiſe.

But marke the order wherein he makes this promiſe; Firſt, he gives grace to pray to him: *Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciouſly*, doe good to us. Then he gives a ſpirit of reformation, promiſing amendment, whereupon this followeth, *that he will forgive their ſinnes, love them freely*, &c. And be, *as the dew unto Iſraell.* He will be as the dew unto Iſraell, but he will give them grace firſt to bee humbled, confeſſe ſinne, and pray to God for grace and forgiveneſſe. There is an order of working in the ſoule: God giveth Juſtification before Sanctification, and before he freeth from the guilt of ſinne, he gives grace to confeſſe ſinne. *If we confeſſe our ſinnes hee is faithfull and juſt to forgive us our ſinnes, and to cleanſe us from them*, ſaith S. *Iohn.* Where theſe goe before, grace will follow: and where they doe not, there will be no Sanctification. Therefore let us conſider the order, for whereſoever God *takes away iniquity* and heales their ſoules in regard of the guilt of their ſinnes: unto thoſe *hee will be as dew.* Therfore if we have ſtill barren ſoules, without deſires or ſtrength to goodneſſe; certainely our ſinnes are ſtill upon the file, for Juſtification is never without holineſſe of life: *Whoſoever is in Chriſt, hee is a new creature.* When this is done, *God will be as the dew*: becauſe he doth pardon our ſinnes for this cauſe, that he may thereby fit us to be entertained in the covenant, and are

1 Ioh. 1. 9.

2 Cor. 5. 17.

wee

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we fit to be in covenant with him untill our natures be altered? Therfore whenſoever he enters into covenant with any, he changeth their natures, that they may be friends, and have communion with him. Then the ſame ſoule which crieth *take away all iniquity*: deſirethalſo *the dew of grace* to make it better; this order is not onely neceſſary on Gods part, but in regard of the ſoule alſo. For, was there ever any ſoule from the beginning of the world that truely deſired forgiveneſſe of ſinnes, which did not alſo therewith deſire grace? ſuch a ſoule were but an hypocriticall ſoule. For if it be rightly touched with ſorrow, it deſires as well ability to ſubdue ſinne, as forgiveneſſe of ſinne: Holineſſe and Righteouſneſſe with forgiveneſſe. Luk. 1. 75.

Therefore leaſt we deceive our ſelves, let this be an uſe of triall from the order, that if we finde not grace wrought in our natures to reſtraine ſinne, and alter our former lewd courſes, our ſinnes are not yet forgiven. For, whereſoever God takes away ſinne, and *loves freely*: there alſo he gives the beſt fruits of his love, beſtowes the *dew* of his grace to worke upon and alter our natures. Chriſt came not by *blood* alone to die for us, but by *water* alſo to ſanctifie us. He will not onely *love freely*: but he will be *as the dew* where he loves freely: therefore if we have not ſanctifying grace, we have not as yet pardoning grace. For, we know the Prophet joynes them both together: *Bleſſed is* Pſa. 32. 1, 2.

Vſe. 1.

the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. If we retaine a guilefull false spirit, our sinnes are not forgiven, we see both these are put together.

Vse. 2. And seeing all these good things come from God, it is necessary to take notice of what hath beene said of Gods goodnesse, that we doe not rob God of his due glory, nor our selves of the due comfort that we may draw thence. The *Egyptians* had the river *Nylus* that overflowed the land every yeere, caused by anniversary winds, which so blew into the mouth of the river, that it could not discharge it selfe into the sea: whereupon it overflowed the bankes, and left a fruitfull slime upon the ground, so that they needed not raine as other Countries, because it was watered with *Nylus*. Hereupon they did not depend upon Gods blessing, nor were so holy as they should: but were proud of their river, as is intimated by *Moses* unto the people. *But the land whether thou goest in to possesse it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence yee came out, where thou sowest thy seed, and watercdst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbes: But the land whether yee goe to possesse it, is a land of hills and valleyes, and drinketh water of the raine of heaven: a land which the Lord thy God careth for,* &c. They having more immediately raine from Heaven, saw Gods hand in watering it, whereas the *Egyptians* did not. And what makes a *Papist* to be so unthankfull? He thinks he can with his owne industry water his owne ground with some-

Deut. 11. 10, 11.

ſomewhat in himſelfe. What makes another man thankfull on the other ſide, ? Becauſe he knoweth he hath all things by dependance from the firſt cauſe: foras in nature, *In God wee live, moove, and have our beeing:* much more in grace, we have all our nouriſhment, ſpirituall being, mooving and life from the *dew* of Heaven: all our heate is from the *Sunne of Righteouſneſſe*, which makes a Chriſtian life, to be nothing elſe but a gratious dependance. *I can do all things* (ſaith Saint *Paul*) big and great words. O! but it is, *threugh Chriſt that ſtrengthens me*. Theſe things muſt not be forgotten, for a child of the Church, is a child of grace, by grace he is what he is, he hath all from Heaven. Suitable to the former place is that in *Ezekiel*. *And the land of Ægypt ſhall be deſolate and waſte, and they ſhall know that I am the Lord, becauſe hee hath ſaid, the river is mine, and I have made it.* He ſhallbe deſolate, becauſe he boaſts and brags of his river, and depends not upon God for the ſweet ſhowers of the former and the latter raine: they boaſted becauſe it was a fat fruitfull countrie, which the *Romans* called their granary. But wee muſt looke for all from Heaven; God by his Spirit will be as the dew.

Act. 17. 28.

Mal. 4. 2.

Phil. 4. 13.

Ezc. 29. 9.

You know in Paradiſe there were foure rivers that watred the Garden of God, that ſweet place, and made it fruitfull; but the heads of all theſe rivers were out of Paradiſe. So it is with the Church of God, *There is a River the ſtreames whereof makes glad the Citie of God* (as the Pſalmiſt

That the head whence all bleſſings come is in Heaven.

Pſal. 46. 4.

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miſt ſpeakes) many pretious comfortable graces (the particulars whereof follow) but where is the head-ſpring of that river? it is in Heaven. We have all from God, through Chriſt the *Mediator*: So though we have of the *Water* and *Dew*, yet notwithſtanding the head and ſpring of all is from without the Church, in *Heaven*, in *Chriſt*, in the *Mediator*. And therefore in all the excellent things we enjoy in the Church, let us looke to the Originall firſt cauſe; Chriſt by his Spirit, *He is as the Dew* to his *Church*.

Vſe. 3. Queſt. Anſw. How to have grace to ſanctifie our natures.

This affoords likewiſe an *Vſe of Direction*, How to come to have grace to ſanctifie and alter our natures? Doe as the Church doth heere, deſire it of God. Lord teach me to ſee and know my ſinnes: Lord *Take away all iniquity, and receive me graciouſly*: Heale my ſoule for I have ſinned againſt thee. O love mee freely, Turne away thy angry face from my ſinnes, and be as the Dew unto my barren ſoule; my dead ſoule, O quicken it, make good thy promiſe, come ſwiftly, come ſpeedily, come unreſiſtably *like raine upon the mowen graſſe*; as ſhowers to water with the dew of grace, and fructifie my drie parched ſoule. Thus we ſhould be earneſt with God for grace for our ſelves, and for the Churches abroad, for our Church and State at home. Therefore let ſuch an uſe be made of it generally, as God and not other forraigne helps may eſpecially bee truſted in: for it is the onely way to deſtruction, to let God alone,

Pſal. 72. 6.

alone, and to truſt to this bodie, and that bodie, for in this caſe (many times) God makes thoſe we thus truſt in our deſtruction, as the *Aſſyrians* and *Babylonians* were the ruine of the ten Tribes. But begin alwaies firſt in Heaven, ſet that great wheele a working, and he will make all things comfortable, eſpecially for our ſoules: then we ſhall not onely finde him to make good this promiſe, *I will be as the Dew unto Iſraell:* but the reſidue which follow after.

He ſhall grow as the Lillie, &c.

Thoſe unto whom God is *Dew*, a double bleſſing, he will make them grow, and ſo grow, as they ſhall grow up as the *Lillie:* Thiſtles and nettles and ill weeds grow apace alſo, but not as Lillies; but Gods children are *Lillies*, and then they grow as *Lillies*.

Queſt. How doe Chriſtians grow like *Lillies?*

Anſw. *Chriſtians grow like Lillies.*

1. *In regard of beauty and glory* Mat. 5. 29.

First, *for beauty and glory*. There is ſuch a kinde of glory and beauty in that plant, that it is ſaid by our Saviour, That *Salomon in all his royalty was not arrayed like one of theſe*, becauſe his was a borrowed glory from the creature, but the *Lillie* hath a native beauty of its owne.

2. *In regard of ſweet fragrant ſmell.*

Againe, the *Lillie* hath *a ſweet and fragrant ſmell*, ſo have Chriſtians, a ſweetneſſe and ſhining expreſt in their converſation; as we have it a little after: *His ſmell ſhall bee as Lebanon*, &c.

3. *In regard of purity.*

And then againe, in regard *of purity and whiteneſſe:*

whiteneſſe: So Chriſtians are pure and unſpotted in their converſation, and their aime is purity and unſpottedneſſe : whiteneſſe betokens an unſtained converſation. So the people and children of God, they are *Lillies*, beautifull and glorious in the eyes of God, and of all thoſe who have ſpirituall eyes, to diſcerne what ſpirituall excellency is: howſoever in regard of the world their life be hidden. Their excellencie is vailed with infirmities, afflictions and diſgraces by the malignant Church: yet in Gods eſteeme, and in the eſteeme of his children they are *Lillies*; all the dirt in the world caſt upon a pearle, cannot alter the nature of it: So, though the world goe about to beſmeere theſe Lillies with falſe imputations, yet they are *Lillies* ſtill and have a glory upon them; for they have a better ſpirit and nature then the world hath. And they are ſweeter in their converſation then the world; for when they have begun to be Chriſtians, they ſweeten their ſpeeches and diſcourſes. There is no Chriſtian who is not of a ſweet converſation, ſo farre as grace hath altered him, he is beautifull, lovely and ſweet, and hath the whiteneſſe of ſincerity.

4. *In regard of ſuddaine growth.*

Now as Gods children are *Lillies*, and then grow as *Lillies* for ſweetneſſe, glory and beauty: ſo they are like *Lillies* eſpecially, in regard of ſuddaine growth. When God gives a bleſſing there is a ſtrange growth on a ſuddaine, as it is obſerved of this plant that it growes very much in a night; So Gods children, when his bleſſing

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bleſſing is upon them, they thrive marvellouſly in a ſhort ſpace. To make this cleere, when the dew of grace fell in our Saviours time upon the Chriſtian world, what a world of Lillies grew ſuddenly. Three thouſand in one day, at one Sermon, converted by *Peter*: The Kingdome of Heaven ſuffered violence in *Iohn Baptiſts* time, that is, the people thronged after the meanes of grace, and offered a holy violence to the things of God. So when this dew of grace fell, it was propheciedof it, *The youth of thy wombe* (ſaith he) *ſhall be as the morning dew*. The Dew comes out of the wombe of the morning, for the morning begets it. *Thy youth ſhall be as the dew of the morning*; that is, they ſhall come in great abundance, aswe ſee it fell out in the firſt ſpring of the Goſpell. In the ſpace of forty yeares by the preaching of the Apoſtles what a deale of good was done through a great part of the world: How did the Goſpell then breake out like lightning by meanes of that bleſſed Apoſtle *Paul*, who himſelfe carried it through a great part of the world.

The firſt ſpring of the Goſpell was ſpeedie in growth
Acts 2.41.
Mat. 11.12.

Pſal. 110.3.

And now in the ſecond ſpring of the Goſpell, when *Luther* began to preach: in the period of a few yeares, how many Countries were converted and turned to the Goſpell? *England*, *Scotland*, *Swethland*, *Denmarke*, the *Palatinate*, a great part of *France*, *Bohemia* and of the *Netherlands*. How many *Lillies* grew up heere on a ſuddaine? Sudden growths are ſuſpected,

The ſecond ſpring of the Goſpell was alſo ſpeedie

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pected, and well they may be, but when God will bleſſe; in a ſhort ſpace a great deale of worke ſhall be done. For God is not tied to length of time. He makes water to be wine every yeare in tract of time, for he turnes the water of Heaven into the iuyce of the grape, ſo there is water turned into wine, that done in tract of time, which he can doe in a ſhorter time, as he did in the Goſpell, *Iohn.* 2. 1, &c. Where is the difference? that he did that miraculouſly in a ſhort time, which he uſually effects in continuance of time. So now many times he doth great matters in a ſhort time, that his power may be knowne and ſeene the more; as wee ſee now in theſe warres of *Germanie*, how quickly God hath turned his hand to helpe his Church, and hiſſe for a deſpiſed forgotten nation to trample downe the inſulting, affliicting, menacing power of the proud enemy: and he can doe ſo ſtill if our ſinnes hinder him not. Surely if we ſtand ſtill and behold the ſalvation of the Lord, wee ſhall ſee great matters effected in a little time. *They ſhall grow as the Lillie*, the accompliſhment of this promiſe is not wholly yet come, for there be bleſſed times approaching, wherein when the *Iewes* are converted, *They ſhall grow as the Lillie*, in thoſe glorious times there ſpoken of, at the converſion of the *Iewes*, and *fulneſſe of* the *Gentiles* comming in: the accompliſhment whereof we expect, to the rejoycing of our hearts; that they ſhould at length prooveindeed with us the true children of

Water every yeare turned into wine.

Rom. 11.

of *Abraham*.

Therefore, we ſhould make this *Vſe* of all, labour that the *Dew* of God, may proove the *Dew* of Grace, that God would make us *Lillies*. If we would be beautifull and glorious, have a luſtre upon us, and be as much beyond others as pearles are beyond common ſtones, and as *Lillies* are better then *Thornes* and *Briers*, let us labour to have the Grace of God, ſo to be accounted Lillies, whatſoever the world accounts of us. *Vſe.*

Againe if the worke be wrought upon us, though the imputations of the world be otherwiſe, let us comfort our ſelves: God accounts me a Lillie: ſet this againſt the baſe eſteeme of the world, conſidering how God judgeth, and thoſe who are led by his Spirit, who judge better of us. And in all aſſociation, combination, and linking in acquaintance, labour to joyne with thoſe that are *Lillies*, who caſt a good and a ſweet ſavour. For we ſhall gaine by their acquaintance, whom *Solomon* affirmeth to be better, and more excellent then their brethren What are other people then? they are but *Thornes*; therefore let not thoſe which are *Lillies* have too much, or neere acquaintance with Thornes, leaſt they pricke us, and (as our Bleſſed Saviour ſaith) turning againe all to berent us. It is ſaid of our Bleſſed Saviour in the *Canticles*, *He feedeth among the Lillies*. And indeed where is there any true delight to be had under Heaven, but in their company who are gratious. 2. Pro. 12. 26. Mat. 7. 6.

What

What can a man receive from prophane ſpirits in regard of comfort of ſoule? nothing, they are as the barren wilderneſſe that can yeeld nothing, their hearts are emptie, therefore their tongues are worth nothing. But let our delight be with *David* toward the moſt excellent of the land, and then we ſhall not onely *grow as the Lillie*, but (as it followeth) *we ſhall caſt forth our rootes as Lebanon.*

Pſal. 101. 6.

And caſt forth his rootes as Lebanon.

Neceſſity of growth in divers reſpects.

Becauſe we have ſpoken of growth and ſhall have occaſion to touch it hereafter, we will not be large in the Point. God here promiſeth a growth not onely to the Church, but to every particular Chriſtian: and it is very neceſſary it ſhould be ſo; for without growth, neither can we give God his due Honour, nor he receive the ſmell of a ſweet Sacrifice from us, as is fit. Nor can we without it with-ſtand our enemies, or beare our croſſes that God may call us too. Againe, without growth and ſtrength we cannot performe thoſe great duties that God requires at our hands of Thankfulneſſe: nor doe things ſo cheerefully and ſweetly as may be comfortable to us. In ſumme without growth, wee can doe nothing acceptably, either to God or his people: the more Grace, the more acceptance. Which is ſpoken that wee may value the Promiſes, this eſpecially that we ſhall grow up in Grace and Knowledge, *as the Lillie, and caſt forth our rootes as Lebanon.*

But how ſhall wee come to grow?

Goe

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Goe to God that we may continually have from him the ſanctifying dew of his grace: goe firſt for pardon of ſinne, then for a heart to reforme our wayes, to enter in a new covenant for the time to come, that wee will not *truſt in Aſſhur*, but will renounce our particular perſonall ſinnes, after which we ſhall find ſanctifying grace, ſo as the *dew* of Gods Spirit will make us grow: therefore, take this order to improove the promiſes. Goe to God for his love in Chriſt, for the pardoning of ſinne, and accepting of us in him, that we may find a ſence of his love in accepting of our perſons, in the pardoning of our ſinne, which is the ground of love: for then this ſence of his love will kindle our love towards him againe, feeling that we are in the ſtate of grace. Then goe to God for his promiſe in this order: Lord, thou haſt promiſed that thou wilt be as the *dew*, and that we ſhall grow as *Lillies*: make good thy promiſe then, that I may finde the effectuall power of it tranſforming my ſoule into the bleſſed Image of thy deare Sonne.

Anſw.

1. *We muſt goe to God claiming the promiſes in a right order.*

And know, that we muſt uſe all the meanes of growth together with the promiſe: for in the things of this life, if a man were aſſured that the next yeare would be a very plentifull yeare; would men therefore becauſe they were thus forewarned, hang up their plowes, and not prepare their ground, no, but they would the rather be encouraged to take paines, becauſe they know that howſoever God be pleaſed

2. *We muſt uſe all meanes of growth.*

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to vouchſafe plenty, yet he will doe it, in the uſe of meanes, obſerving and depending on his Providence. So when he hath made gratious promiſes of the *Dew* of his Grace, and of growth as *Lillies*, &c. This implyeth a ſubordinate ſerving of his gratious Providence; therefore it is a way to ſtirre us up unto the uſe of all meanes rather, and not to take us off from them. Even as God when hee told the Iſraelites: *I will give you the Land of Canaan*, did onely promiſe it, leaving the remainder to their conqueſt in the uſe of meanes. Should this have made them caſt away their ſwords? No, but it was that they might fight, and fight the more couragiouſly. So when God hath promiſed growth in Grace, ſhould this make us careleſſe? O no, it ſhould make us more diligent and carefull, and comforts us in the uſe of meanes, knowing that our labour ſhall not be in vaine in the Lord. Now Lord I know I ſhall not looſe my labour in hearing, in receiving of the Sacrament, in the communion of Saints, and uſe of ſanctified Meanes; for thou haſt made a gratious promiſe, that *I ſhall grow as the Lillie*, and that thou wilt be *as the Dew unto me*; therefore make thy good worke begun effectuall unto my poore ſoule, that it may flouriſh and bee refreſhed as a watred garden. But there are ſeverall ſorts of growth formerly touched, either

Gen. 17. 8.

1 Cor. 15. 58.

1. *A growing upward*, or
2. *A growing in the roote*, or

3. *A Spread-*

3. *A Spreading and growing in the Fruit, and Sweetneſſe.*

Therefore Chriſtians muſt not alwayes looke to have their growth in one and the ſame place, but muſt wiſely conſider of Gods prudent dealing with his children in this kinde, as will bee further ſeene hereafter in the particulars.

Hee ſhall caſt forth his rootes as Lebanon.

That is, He ſhall caſt and ſpread, and ſo put forth his rootes as *Lebanon*: he ſhall grow upward and downeward; in regard of firmeneſſe he ſhall be more rooted. In what proportion Trees grow upwards, in that proportion they take roote downewards: becauſe otherwiſe, they may be top heavy and overturne, a blaſt of winde taking advantage of their talneſſe and weakeneſſe to roote them out the ſooner: therefore proportionable to their ſpreading above, there muſt be a rooting in the ground. As the Prophet ſpeakes to *Hezekiah* of Gods people, *And the remnant that is eſcaped of the houſe of Iudah, ſhall yet againe take roote downeward and beare fruit upward.* 2 King. 19. 30. There muſt be firmeneſſe in the roote, as well as growth in the branches, for which cauſe, God here promiſeth to the Church and every Chriſtian ſtability and fixedneſſe, that as he groweth upward like the Lillie, ſo he ſhould grow downward, firme and ſtrong.

Now whence comes this rootedneſſe and firme ſtabilitie of Gods Children? *Queſt.*

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Anſw. *The cauſe of the Saints ſtability*

Eſpecially from this, that they are now in the Covenant of grace, rooted in Chriſt who is God-man, in whom they are firmely rooted. In *Adam* we had a roote of our owne, but now our roote is in Chriſt. All grace is firſt powred into Chriſts bleſſed Nature, and then at a ſecond hand, *Out of his fulneſſe we all receive grace for grace.* Being rooted in Chriſt we become firme, for there is in him an everlaſting marriage and union. *The Roote beareth us, wee beare not the Roote:* Chriſt beareth us, wee beare not him. So now in the covenant of grace, all the firmeneſſe is out of us. Even as ſalvation it ſelfe was wrought out of us by a Mediatour; ſo it is kept by a Mediatour out of us: all goodneſſe, grace, and favour of God to us is not in us but in Chriſt, but it is ſo out of us as Chriſt and we are one. But now we onely ſpeake of the cauſe of our firmeneſſe and ſtability, that becauſe we are in the ſtate of grace, we have an everlaſting firmeneſſe as we are in Chriſt Jeſus. God now making a ſecond covenant, he will not have it diſanulled as the firſt was, for his ſecond workes are better then his firſt. His firſt Covenant was, *Doe this and live,* but his ſecond is, *Beleeve this and live:* So as howſoever our ſtate in grace be but little, yet it is of a bleſſed growing ſpreading firme nature, ſo ſure, as what is begun in grace, will end in glory, where God gives the firſt fruits, he will give tenths, yea the full harveſt, and all. Becauſe by the covenant of grace, wee

Ioh. 1.16.

Rom. 11.18.

Lev. 18.5.

Rom 10.9.

are

are one with Chriſt, who is an everlaſting Head that never dyes. Sub-ſervant to this now we have promiſes in the covenant of grace, That we ſhall never depart from him, and that he vvill never depart from us to doe us good, he puts an awband into our hearts, that we ſhall never depart from him: but this Point being often touched, leaving it, vve vvill come to anſwer ſome objections.

Object. 1. It may ſeeme that theſe things are not ſo, Gods Children doe not alvvayes grow and ſpread themſelves: but they are often overturned and fall.

Anſw. 1. This is nothing, they are mooved, but not remooved: they are as Mount Zion vvhich cannot be remooved, but abideth forever: vvhich though it may be ſhaken with earthquakes yet it is not remooved thereby. The gates of Hell and ſorrovves of death may ſet ſore upon them, but not prevaile againſt them, they may fall but not fall away, they may be as a wether-beaten tree, but not as a tree puld up by the rootes: therefore they are compared here to a tree whoſe roote ſtands faſt ſtill. This much the Church after a ſore tryall and endurance of much affliction confeſſeth. *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee: neither have we dealt falſly in thy covenant: our heart is not turned backe, neither have our ſteps declined from thy way, though thou haſt broken us in the place of Dragons; and covered us with the ſhadow of death,* &c.

Pſal. 125. 1.

Mat. 16. 18.

Pſal. 44. 17, 18 19.

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And againe, though they fall; yet they learne to ſtand faſt by their falls, are gainers by their loſſes, and become ſtronger by their weakneſſes: as tall Cedars the more they are ſhaken by the winds, the more deeply they take rooting: So Chriſtians, the more ſtormes and blaſts they have, the more they are faſtly rooted: that which we thinke to be the overthrow of Gods children, doth but roote them deeper. As *Peter* after his fall took deeper rooting, and *David*, &c. ſo after all outward ſtormes and declinings, here is the fruit of all; they take deeper rooting, whilſt their ſinnes are purged away by their fierie afflictions.

Iſa. 30.

Object. 2. But why then are they not more comfortable in their lives, in feeling and ſeeing of Gods wiſe ordering of things?

Anſw. 1. Firſt, becauſe though God worke ſtrongly and ſurely in them, yet he doth it for the moſt part ſlowly (as the Wiſeman ſpeakes) *all his workes being beautifull in time:* therefore they apprehend not their comforts as they ought, and ſo goe mourning the longer; the time of knitting divine experiences together not being yet come.

Eccle. 3. 11.

2. Secondly, becauſe the anguiſh of the croſſe (if it bee quicke and ſharpe) many times takes away the apprehenſions of Gods excellent ends in the ſame: as the children of Iſraell could not hearken unto *Moſes* for anguiſh and vexation of ſpirit: *No affliction* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *for the preſent is joyous*, though afterwards

Exo. 6. 9.
Heb. 12. 11.

it

it brings forth the quiet fruit of Righteousnesse.

Then againe *Satans malice*, who casts in floods of temptations, is great: so that the soule cannot enjoy that sweet tranquillity and peace it otherwise might, casting in doubts and numbers of what-ifs into the soule: so that for a time, he causes a strong diversion in them, whence after that, there followeth peace againe, when those temptations are seene and overcome. 3.

It is long also of our selves, who are not armed for crosses and afflictions, untill we are suddenly surpized by them; and then leaving our watchfullnesse, and forgetting our consolation, wee are strucke downe for the present by them, and cannot support our selves against them. 4.

And lastly, *it comes also from Gods wise ordering and disposing Providence*, who will not do all at once: our comforts must come by degrees, now a little and then a little: our experience, and so our comforts come together, after we have honoured God in dependance upon his will and pleasure; and yet this hinders not, but a Christian growes still though hee be for the present insensible of it: as a man is alive and growes whilst he sleepes, though he be not sensible of it. Other objections have beene formerly touched. 5.

Hee shall cast forth his rootes as Lebanon.

We see then that the state of Gods children is

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The difference of the godly and wicked, the one having a foundation, the other none.

a firme and a ſtable condition, whence we may obſerve the difference betwixt Gods people and others. Gods people are rooted and ſpread their roote. But the other have rottenneſſe in their roote, being curſed without any foundation. For take a man who is not a good Chriſtian, where is his foundation? onely in the things of this world. Now all heere is vanity, and we our ſelves by truſting vanity become vaine; *Every man in his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity*; vanity in himſelfe, and truſts in vanity. What ſtableneſſe can there be in vanity? Can a man *ſtare non ſtante?* ſtand in a thing that ſtands not in it ſelfe? Will a picture continue that is drawne upon the Ice? will it not faile and melt away when the Ice upon which it is drawne thawes? So all theſe who have not the dew of Gods grace, they are as a picture upon the water, have no foundation, and ſtand upon that which cannot ſtand it ſelfe. Therefore the Scripture compareth them to the worſt of graſſe, which hath no good roote, graſſe upon the houſe top, which hath no bleſſing of thoſe that come by, but there ſtands perking up above others. So it is with men that have no grace, they can perke up above others: but as they have no ſtable roote, nor the bleſſing of Gods people, ſtability, with the Spirit of God inwardly, and the prayers of Gods people to water and bleſſe them: ſo they periſh and wither quickly. Nay whole nations (if wicked) have no foundation. What is become of the great Monarchies of the world?

Pſal. 62. 9.

Pſa. 129. 6.

The

The *Aſſyrian*, *Perſian*, *Grecian* and *Romane* Monarchies? and for *Cities* themſelves, they have died like men, and had their periods. Onely a Chriſtian hath a kingdome, a ſtable condition which cannot be ſhaken: he takes his roote ſtrongly, and growes ſtronger and ſtronger till he growes to heaven, nay indeed while he lives hee is rooted in Heaven before his time, for though we be in Earth we are rooted in Heaven. Chriſt our roote is in Heaven, and his Faith which is wrought from Heaven, carrieth us to Chriſt in Heaven, and love that grace of union following the union of Faith, carrieth us to Chriſt alſo: even before our time, we are there in *Faith*, *Love* and *Ioy*. Therefore a poore Chriſtian is firme and ſtable even in this life, having union with Chriſt, though he creepe upon the earth and ſeeme a deſpiſed perſon, yet his roote is in Heaven, where he hath union with Chriſt; *His life is hid with God in Chriſt*: who *when hee ſhall appeare*, he ſhall appeare with him likewiſe in glory. Therefore, if Chriſt be firme, the eſtate of a Chriſtian muſt needs be firme: For he is a *Cedar*, another man is as graſſe or corne upon the houſe top, *All fleſh is graſſe*, ſaith the Prophet: *Object.* I but they have wit and memory, and parts, *&c.* yet they are but as the flower of the graſſe, perhaps better then ordinary graſſe, but the graſſe withereth, and the flower fadeth: what continueth then? *O the word of the Lord*, and comfort and grace by that word, *endures for ever*, and

Heb. 12. 28.

That a Chriſtian is firme and ſtable, becauſe his roote is in Heaven.

Coloſſ 3 3, 4.

Iſa 40. 6.

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and makes us endure for ever. This is excellently ſet downe by the Prophet *David*, we ſee there the righteous man is compared to a tree planted by the water ſide, his leafe failes not. So a Chriſtian is planted in Chriſt, he is ſtill on the growing hand, and his leafe ſhall not wither,

Pſal. 1. 3.

Pſal. 92. 13.

Thoſe who are planted in the houſe of the Lord, ſhall flouriſh in the Courts of our God, They ſhall ſtill bring fruit in their old age, they ſhall be fat and flouriſhing, they ſhall grow like a Cedar in Lebanon.

Vſe. 1. *A comfort from the firmneſſe of our condition.*

This cleere difference, ſhould ſtirre us up to be comforted in our condition, which is firme and ſtable. Why doe we value chriſtall above glaſſe? Becauſe it is brighter, and of more continuance. Why doe we value continuing things, inheritances above annuities? Becauſe they continue. If by the ſtrength of our diſcourſe we value things anſwerable to their laſting; why ſhould we not value the beſt things? our eſtate in grace, this is a laſting condition, for a Chriſtian is like a *Cedar*, that is rooted, and takes deeper and deeper roote, and never leaves growing till he grow to Heaven: *Hee ſhall caſt forth his Rootes as Lebanon.*

Vſe. 2.

Againe, let all them make Uſe of it, that find not the worke of grace upon their hearts: O! let them conſider what a fading condition they are in, they thinke they can doe great matters, perhaps they have a deſtructive power, they labour to doe miſchiefe, to cruſh whom they will in this world. But what is all this, we ſee what

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what the Pſalmiſt ſaith of a *Doeg* a curſed man, who had a deſtroying power. *Why boaſteſt thou thy ſelfe in miſchiefe O mighty man? the goodneſſe of God endureth continually.* Why boaſteſt thou thy ſelfe that thou canſt doe miſchiefe and overturne Gods people? *&c.* Know this that the good-will of God continues. Boaſt not thy ſelfe, thy tongue deviſeſt miſchiefe, as a ſharpe razor, God ſhall deſtroy thee forever. He ſhall caſt thee away and pull thee out of thy dwelling, and roote thee out of the land of the living. Thoſe men that rejoyce in a deſtructive power, in their ability to do miſchiefe, and exerciſing of that ability all they can, they ſhall be pluckt out of their place, and rooted out of the land of the living. And as it is in *Iob*, they ſhall be hurled away as a man hurles a ſtone out of a ſling, Then what ſhall the righteous ſay? they ſhall ſee and feare, and ſay: *Loe this is the man that made not God his ſtrength, but truſted in the aboundance of his riches, and ſtrengthened himſelfe in wickedneſſe.* He thought to roote himſelfe ſo faſt that he ſhould never be remooved, but at the laſt it ſhall come to paſſe, that all that ſee him ſhall ſay: loe, ſee, what is become of him? this is the man, that truſted in his riches, and made not God his ſtrength, what is become of him? ſaith *David* of himſelf, *I am like a greene Olive tree in the houſe of God: I truſt in the mercy of God for ever and ever.* Let them truſt if they will in Riches, Power, Strength, and Favour with *Saul* and great men, yet notwithſtanding

Pſal. 52. 1.

Job. 27. 21.

Pſal. 52. 7.

Pſal. 52. 8.

ſtanding be *Doeg* what he will, *I ſhall be a green Olive planted in the houſe of God*, &c.

So here is a double uſe the Scripture makes of theſe things. 1. The godly man rejoyceth in his condition, and 2. Other men feare and grow wiſe not to truſt to their fading condition. They are (as the Prophet ſpeakes) *as a bay tree* that flouriſhes for a time, and then after come to nothing, *their place is no where found.* They keepe a great deale of doe in the world for a time, but afterwards, where is ſuch a one? their place is no where found, no where comfortably, they have a place in Hell, but comfortably a place no where. This is the eſtate of all thoſe who have not a good roote, for ſaith Chriſt, *Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted ſhall be rooted up.* It is true of every condition and of every man, if God have not planted him in that excellent ſtate, or doe not in time, he ſhall be rooted up: for the time will come that the earth will hold him no longer, he rootes himſelfe now in the earth, which then ſhall caſt him out. He cannot ſtay here long, Heaven will not receive him, then Hell muſt. What a miſerable thing is this, when wee place and bottome our ſelves upon things that will not laſt? when our ſelves ſhall out-laſt our foundation? when a man ſhall live for ever and that which he builds on is fading, what extreamitie of folly is this? to build on Riches, Favour, Greatneſſe, Power, Inheritance, which either muſt be taken from him, or he from them

Pſal. 37. 35.

Mat. 15. 13.

them, he knoweth not how ſoone.

What makes a man miſerable, but the diſappointing of his hopes, and croſſing of his affections? now when a man pitcheth his ſoule to much upon his worldly things, from which there muſt be a parting, this is as if it were the rending of the skinne from the fleſh, and the fleſh from the bones, when a mans ſoule is rent from that he pitcheth his happineſſe on, this maketh a man miſerable: for miſery is in diſappointing the hopes and croſſing the affections. Now onely a Chriſtian plants his heart and affections on that which is everlaſting, of equall continuance with his ſoule: as he ſhall live for ever, ſo hee is rooted for ever in that which muſt make him everlaſtingly happy. Theſe things wee heare, and they are undeniable true, but how few make uſe of them to deſiſt from going on in a plodding ſwelling deſire of an earthly condition to over-top other men? ſuch labour to grow in tauleneſſe and height, but ſtrive not to be rooted. Now that which growes perking up in height, over-topping other things, yet without roote, what will become of it? It will be turned up by the Rootes.

How to be rooted in Grace.

Now, How ſhall we grow to be rooted? For to attaine heereunto, it is not onely neceſſary to apply the promiſes and challeng God with them, but to conſider alſo what wayes he will make them good.

1. To know Gods free grace

Firſt, labour to know God and his free Grace in

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2 Pet 3.18.

in Jeſus Chriſt: *Grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt*; they goe both together, the more we grow in the knowledge of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and of the Grace of God in him, the more grace and rootedneſſe wee ſhall have. For that which the ſoule doth cleerely apprehend, it faſtens upon in that meaſure it apprehendeth it. Cleereneſſe in the underſtanding breeds earneſtneſſe in the affections, and faſtneſſe too. So the more wee grow in knowledg, the more we roote our ſelves in that we know. And therefore the Apoſtle prayes for the *Epheſians*, that they might have the Spirit of Revelation, *&c.* That they might know the height, breadth, depth and length of Gods love, that paſſeth knowledge, *Epheſ.* 3.14. *For this cauſe I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt, of whom the whole family of Heaven and Earth is named: that he would grant you according to the riches of his Glory, to bee ſtrengthened by his Spirit in the inner-man, that Chriſt may dwell in your hearts by faith, that ye being rooted and grounded in love*, in the ſenſe of Gods love to us, and ſo of our love to him againe (for we are not rooted in love to God, till we be rooted in the ſenſe of Gods love to us) *that you may bee able to comprehend with all Saints, the height and breadth*, &c.

I. *Labour to know the Promiſes.*

And withall, labour to know the gratious Promiſes of Chriſt, for we are knit to him by vertue of his word and Promiſes: which like himſelfe are, *Yea and Amen.* JEHOVAH yeſterday

yeſterday, to day & the ſame for ever. So al his Promiſes made in him, they are *Yea and Amen*, in themſelves firme, and firme to us in him. They are *Yea and Amen:* that is, they are made and performed in Chriſt, in whom they are ſure to be performed, and thereupon they are firme too. God made them, who is JEHOVAH, and they are made in Chriſt that is JEHOVAH. So God the Father JEHOVAH, he promiſeth, and he makes them good in Chriſt JEHOVAH, who is unchangeable.

2 Cor. 1. 20.

3. *Our hearts muſt be ſtabliſhed on that which is firme.*

But this is not enough, wee muſt labour to have our hearts ſtabliſhed, that they may rely firmely on that which is firme. For if a thing be never ſo firme, except we rely firmely on it, there is no ſtability or ſtrength from it. Now when there is ſtrength in the thing, and ſtrength in the ſoule, that ſtrength is impregnable and unconquerable ſtrength. In Chriſt they are Yea and Amen, in whom he ſtabliſheth us, annoints us, ſeales us, and gives us the earneſt of the Spirit in our hearts.

How God doth ſtabliſh us.

How doth God ſtabliſh us upon the Promiſes? The reſt which followeth is an explication of this; when he gives us the earneſt of the Spirit, and ſeales us to be his, in token he meanes to make good the bargaine, then we are eſtabliſhed. But we are never firmely eſtabliſhed, till we get the aſſurance of ſalvation. Then as the Promiſes are *Yea and Amen* in themſelves, ſo we are ſtabliſhed upon them, when we are ſealed and have the earneſt of the Spirit. Let us labour

bour therefore to grow in the knowledge of Gods love in Chriſt, to know the height, breadth, depth, and length of it, and to grow in all the gratious Promiſes which are made in Chriſt, who is Amen himſelfe, as his Promiſes are, and then when we are ſealed and annointed by the Spirit, we ſhall be ſo ſtabliſhed that nothing ſhall moove us. Therefore let us uſe all meanes for the eſtabliſhing of growth in us, the Word and Sacraments eſpecially. For as Baptiſme admits us into the houſe of God, ſo by the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, the bleſſed food of the ſoule, wee are ſtrengthened. In the uſe of theſe meanes, let us make ſuite unto God to make good his gratious Promiſe unto us, that wee ſhall grow as *Lillies*, and take roote, as *the Cedars in Lebanon*.

Let us know that we ought every day to labour to be more and more rooted: do we know what times may befall us? We have need to grow every day, to grow upward, and in breadth, and in depth. If wee conſidered what times we may live to, it ſhould force us to grow every way, eſpecially in humility, that roote and mother of graces, to grow downeward in that, to grow in knowledge and faith untill wee be filled with the fullneſſe of God.

object. A poore Chriſtian oft times makes this Objection, O, I doe not grow, therefore I feare my ſtate, I am oft ſhaken, therefore this Promiſe is not fulfilled to me.

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Anſw.

To this I anſwer, Chriſtians may be deceived, for they doe grow ofttimes in firmeneſſe, ſtrength and ſtability, though they doe not ſpread out; they may grow in refinedneſſe, that that which comes from them may bee more pure, and leſſe mixed with naturall corruption, Pride, Selfe-love and the like. This is a temptation that old men are ſubject too eſpecially, in whom the heate of nature decayes, who thinke withall that grace decayes. But it is not ſo, for ofttimes when grace is carried with the heate of nature, it makes a greater ſhew being helpt by nature. The demonſtration, but not the truth of grace is thus helpt. Therfore this clauſe of the Promiſe is made good in old Chriſtians, they are every day more and more rooted, firme, ſtable and judicious, and more able in thoſe graces which belong to their place and condition. Therefore, they ſhould not be diſcouraged, though they be not carried with the ſtreame and tide of nature, help'd with that vigour that ſometime was in them. They grow in judiciouſneſſe, mortifiedneſſe, in heavenly-mindedneſſe, and in ability to give good counſell to others. This is well, for we grow not in grace one way, but divers waies; not onely when wee grow in outward demonſtration, and in many fruits and actions; but when wee grow in refinedneſſe and judiciouſneſſe (as was ſaid) then wee are ſaid to grow likewiſe.

Yet notwithſtanding, it ſhould be the indea-

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vour of all to grow what they can in grace, when, if they grow not ſo faſt as others, let them know that there are ſeverall ages in Chriſt. A young Chriſtian cannot be ſo planted and ſo deepely rooted as another that is of a greater ſtanding. This ſhould not diſcourage any, ſeeing there are babes in Chriſt, as well as ſtrong men. Therefore where there is truth of heart, with indeavour to grow better and better, and to uſe all meanes, let no man be diſcouraged. Remember alway this for a truth, that we may grow, and we ought to grow, and the children of God ordinarily have growne more and more, both in fruitfullneſſe and ſtedfaſtneſſe every way, but not with a like growth in meaſure, or time. Therefore labour to make uſe of theſe Promiſes, and not to favour our ſelves in an ungrowing eſtate, for grace is of a growing nature. If it grow not in fruitfullneſſe, yet it growes in the Roote; as a plant ſometimes growes in fruitfullneſſe, ſometimes in the Roote. There is more vertue in Winter-time in the Roote, then in the fruit which is gone. So a Chriſtian groweth one way if not another: though not in outward demonſtration, yet in Humiliation. God ſometimes ſees it neceſſary, that our branches ſhould not ſpread for a while; but that we ſhould grow in Humility, by ſome faults and ſinnes we fall and ſlip into, that wee may ſee our own weakneſſe, and looke up.

Let us labour therefore who have ſo long enjoyed ſuch ſtore of bleſſed meanes, under the

dew

dew of Gods grace and the influence of his Spirit, in the Paradice of God, his Houſe and Church, having ſo long lived in this *Eden*, let us labour now to ſpread, and grow in fruitfullneſſe, that ſo we may be filled with the fullneſſe of God. It is the chiefe thing of all to be rooted and grow in grace. You ſee, God when he would ſingle out a bleſſing, he tells them not, that they ſhall grow rich, that they ſhall ſpread out and grow rich in the world. No, but you whom I love freely, take this as a fruit of it, *You ſhall grow as the Lillie*, you ſhall grow fruitfull *as the Olive*, &c. This is the comfort of a Chriſtian, though he growes downeward oft in the world, and things of this naturall life, yet hee growes upward in another condition, as *Lillies* and *Cedars*, they grow downewards one way, but they grow upwards another. Perhaps they may decay in their ſtate and favour, and in their practiſe and cunning in this life: but a Chriſtian, if he be in the uſe of right meanes, and put in ſuite the gratious Promiſes, he is ſure ſtill to grow in *Grace*, in *Faith* and *Love*, and in the inner man.

Is not this a comfort, that a Chriſtian hath a comfortable meditation of the time to come in all his croſſes? That it is for better and better ſtill: that as in time he is neerer Heaven, ſo he ſhall be fitter and fitter, and neerer and neerer ſtill with a diſpoſition ſuitable to the place. That the time to come is the beſt time, and that he ſhall grow every way, in height, in bredth,

in depth and length, and apprehenſion of Gods love: and that the more hee growes in knowledge of theſe things, the more hee ſhall grow in all dimenſions, being as ſure of things to come, as of things paſt: and that neither things preſent nor to come, ſhall ever ſeparate him from the love of God in Chriſt. What a comfortable ſtate is a Chriſtian in, who is alwaies on the mending hand, that is ſuch a childe of hope, when the hope of the wicked ſhall periſh? Let us labour therefore, that we may be in ſuch a caſe and ſtate of ſoule, as that thoughts of the time to come may bee comfortable: that when wee thinke we muſt be traſplanted hence out of the Paradice and Eden of Gods Church, into a heavenly Paradice, that all our changes ſhall be for the better. What a fearefull thing is it to be in the ſtate of nature? What foundation hath a man in that eſtate, who hath no roote heere, and that roote he hath will faile him ere long? How fearefull is it for ſuch a man to thinke of a change, when it is not a change for the better?

Here is wiſedome, if we will be wiſe to purpoſe, let us be wiſe this way, labour in the firſt place, to prize Gods favours, and to know how to come by them in the uſe of all meanes. Look to God for the performance of theſe gratious promiſes: for they are not of what we ſhall doe in our ſelves; but what God will do in the Covenant of grace. And if a Chriſtian ſhould not be rooted and grow ſtronger and ſtronger, wee

ſhould

ſhould not faile, but God and Chriſt ſhould faile, who is our roote and beares us up. Therefore God hath taken upon him the performance of all theſe things; what remaineth from us, but a carefull uſing of all meanes; and in the uſe of all, a going out of our ſelves to God, That hee would be *as the Dew to us*, and cauſe us by the dew of his Spirit to grow more and more rooted in grace as long as we live in this world; and then our rooting and ſtability lies upon God, not upon us: he failes if we faile; who hath undertaken, That *wee ſhall grow as the Lillie, and caſt foorth our Roots as Lebanon.*

The end of the ſeventh Sermon.

THE EIGHTH SERMON.

Hos. 14. 6, 7.

His branches ſhall ſpread, his beauty ſhall be as the Olive tree and his ſmell as Lebanon.

They that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall returne; they ſhall revive as the Corne, and grow as the Vine, the ſent thereof ſhall be as the Vine of Lebanon.

WE have heard at large heretofore what petitions God put into the heart and mouth of his Church: as alſo what gratious anſwer God gives his owne Petitions: hee cannot denie the prayers made by his owne

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WE have heard at large heretofore what petitions God put into the heart and mouth of his Church: as also what gratious answer God gives his owne Petitions: hee cannot denie the prayers made by his owne

Spirit. And as he is goodneſſe it ſelfe, ſo hee ſhewes it in this, that he goes beyond all that we can deſire, thinke or ſpeake: his anſwer is more tranſcendent, as the Apoſtle ſpeakes: *hee does exceeding abundantly above all that wee aske or thinke*, &c. For whereas they in particular and in briefe ſay, *Doe good to us, and receive us graciouſly*: He tells them, *He will bee as the Dew unto them*: and from thence, being *Dew to* them, is their ſpreading and growing as a *Lillie*, and caſting of their roots as *Lebanon*: and *their Branches ſhall ſpread*, &c. and all this to incourage us to come to ſo powerfull and large-hearted a God; who, as he is able to doe more then we deſire of him, ſo he will alſo doe it. *Hee will be as the Dew unto us.* This is the generall of all, for all other fruitfullneſſe comes from this: 1. *God will bee as the Dew*, and then 2. *They ſhall grow as the Lillie, and caſt their Roots as the Cedars in Lebanon*, they ſhall not onely grow upward but downward, for the *Lillie* quickly ſpreads it ſelfe forth: but they ſhall be like the trees of Lebanon for ſtedfaſtneſſe; and then ſpread in breadth, grow in all dimenſions. Which is fulfilled of the Church in generall, and of every particular Chriſtian, when once hee is in Chriſt, uſing ſanctified meanes: they grow then in the roote, and upright, and in every dimenſion: *His Branches ſhall ſpread*, and then

His beauty ſhall be as the Olive Tree.

Which though fruitfull and excellent, yet becauſe

Ephes. 3. 19.

becauſe it hath no ſweet ſmell, it is added:

His ſmell ſhall be as Lebanon.

Theſe excellencies promiſed to the Church of God, are not all in one tree, but yet they are in ſome ſort in every Chriſtian, what agrees not all to one plant, agrees to the *plants of Righteouſneſſe*; they grow upwards and downewards, ſpread and are ſavoury and fruitfull: all agrees to a tree of righteouſneſſe. Wee ſay of man he is a little world, a compendium of this great world, as indeed there is a comprising of all the excellencies of the world in man; for he hath a being with thoſe creatures who have onely that, and therewith he hath growing ſenſe and reaſon, whereby he hath communion with God and thoſe underſtanding Spirits the Angels: ſo that he is as it were a ſumme of all the excellencies of the creatures, a little world indeed. The great world hath nothing, but the little world hath the ſame in ſome proportion. So it is in Grace, a Chriſtian hath all excellencies in him that are in the world: there is not an excellency in any thing but it is in an higher kinde in a Chriſtian. He hath the beauty of the *Lillie*, and he growes up in ſpreading, ſmell and fruitfulneſſe; his wiſdome exceeds that of all the creatures: there is not an excellencie in nature, but wee have ſome proportionable excellencie in grace which is above it. God uſeth theſe outward things to helpe us, that we ſhould doe both body and ſoule good by the creatures. Whatſoever doth

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our bodies good, either by neceſsity or delight, they helpe our ſoules: as plants and trees, not onely refreſh the outward man, and the ſenſes, but alſo they teach our ſoules, as heere the Holy Ghoſt teacheth them by outward things. Firſt it is ſaid

His Branches ſhall ſpread.

When God enriches the ſoule with ſaving grace, one ſhall grow every way and flouriſh aboundantly, extending forth their goodneſſe one every ſide largely to the knowledge and open view of others, and then further,

His Beauty ſhall be as the Olive tree.

What is the beauty of the Olive tree? to be uſefull, fruitfull, and to bring forth good fruit. Indeed the glory of a tree is to be loaden with fruit, and uſefull fruit, which is the beſt property of fruit to be uſefull and delightfull. So the glory of a Chriſtian, who is a plant of righteouſneſſe, of Gods own planting, is to abound in fruits of Righteouſneſſe. Indeed the Olive is a very fruitfull tree, and the oyle which comes and diſtils from it hath many excellent properties agreeing to graces.

1. *How the fruitfulneſſe of the Olive is compared to divers graces.*

Amongſt the reſt, it is a Royall kinde of liquor, that will bee above the reſt: ſo Grace it commands all other things, it gives a ſanctified uſe of the creature and ſubdues all corruption.

2. And then it is unmixed, it will mingle with nothing; light and darkeneſſe will not mingle, no more will grace and corruption, for the one

one is hoſtile to the other as *Salomon* ſpeakes, *The Iuſt is abhomination to the wicked.* Pro. 29. 27.

Further, It is ſweet, ſtrengthning and feeding the life: as in *Zacharie*, there is mention made of two Olives before the Lord, which feede the two candleſticks. And Olives of Grace, have alwayes fatneſſe diſtilling from Chriſt to feed his lamp with oyle, Gods Church hath alwayes oyle: and thoſe that are Olives, they keepe the Church by their particular calling. 3. Zach. 4 3.

1. *He ſhall be fruitfull as the Olive*, and
2. *Abundant in fruit as the Olive.*
3. *Conſtant in fruit, like the Olive*

For it beares fruit much, and never failes, no not in winter: and hath a perpetuall greenneſſe. Indeed the child of God hath a perpetuall verdor: as it is *Pſal.* 1, *his leaſe never failes:* Because that which is the cauſe of flouriſhing never failes him. Which cauſes are two, Pſal. 1. 3.

1. *Moyſture.*
2. *Heate.*

For we know *Moyſture* and *Heate*, theſe two are the cauſes of all kindly growth. If a tree have more moyſture then heate, then it is wateriſh, if it have more heate then moyſture, then there is no bigneſſe in the fruit. So true it is, that *moiſture* and *heate* are the cauſes of fruitfullneſſe, in a good proportion. So Gods children having the Sonne of Righteouſneſſe alwayes ſhining upon them, and being alwayes under the *Dew* of grace (the promiſe being, *to* *Cauſes of the perpetuall flouriſhing of the Saints.*

be

be as the Dew to Iſrael) having all *Dew* to fall upon them for *moyſture*: and having the Sonne of Righteouſneſſe to ſhine upon them to make them fruitfull, their leafe never failes, they never give over bringing forth fruit: becauſe they have in them cauſes perpetuating fruitfulneſſe, though not alike. Becauſe Chriſt by his Spirit is a voluntary, and not a naturall cauſe of their fruitfulneſſe. That is, he is ſuch a cauſe as workes ſometimes more and ſometimes leſſe, to ſhew that grace ſprings not from our ſelves, and to acquaint us with our own weakenes and inſufficiency. Heaven is the perfection of all both Graces and Comforts. Wherfore *Peter* calls the ſtate of Heaven, *an inheritance, immortall and undefiled, that fades not away*: Why is that an eſtate of grace and comfort more then this of this world? Becauſe it is a never fading eſtate, there they are alway in one tenure, and becauſe Chriſt ſhewes himſelfe alway there, there is abundance of water to moyſten them, and heate to cheriſh them. There is no intermingling or ſtopping in growth as is here; therefore it is an inheritance that fadeth not away, having the ſupply of a perpetuall cauſe of flouriſhing.

1 Pet 1.4.

This in ſome degree is true of the Church on earth, it is the inheritance of God that fades not, and Chriſtians therein are Olives that bring foorth fruit conſtantly, having a perpetuall freſhneſſe and greenneſſe. So the Righteous man is compared to the *Cedars of Lebanon* which bring forth much fruit in their age: he

Pſal. 92. 12.

ſhall

ſhall be fruitfull as the Olive, from all which this point formerly touched followeth.

That it is the Excellencie and Glory of a Chriſtian to be fruitfull in his place. Obſerv.

Both to be fruitfull in his place as a Chriſtian, and in his particular calling. To be fruitfull as a Magiſtrate, as a Miniſter, as a governour of a family, as a neighbour, as a friend, to be fruitfull in all. Becauſe in Religion every neere relation is as it were a joyning together of the body of Chriſt one to another, by which ſome good is derived from one to another. God uſes theſe relations as conduits to convey graces. A good Chriſtian, the meaneſt of them is a good neighbour, and doth a great deale of good, being fruitfull as a neighbour, fruitfull as a friend, much more as a husband, as a Magiſtrate, as a Miniſter. Theſe relations are a knitting to Chriſt, by which fatneſſe and ſap is derived from the head for the good of the whole bodie. Therefore a Chriſtian in all relations is fruitfull. When he comes to be a Chriſtian, he conſiders like good *Mordecai* what good he may doe: as he told *Heſter, what if thou be called to the kingdome for this purpoſe?* So a Chriſtian will reaſon with himſelf, what if I be called to be a Magiſtrate or a Miniſter for this purpoſe? what if I be called to be a friend for ſuch or ſuch a purpoſe: to doe this or this good? indeed ſuch are gratious Quæres made to a mans ſoule, to enquire for what purpoſe hath God raiſed me? to doe this or that. To be Heſt. 4. 14.

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be idle, or barren, or noyſome. O no, to be a plant of Gods planting: my glory ſhall bee my fruitfullneſſe in my place.

Therefore let us every one conſider with our ſelves, wherfore God hath ſet us in the Church in our particular ſtandings. Wherein let us remember this, that howſoever God may endure barrenneſſe out of the Church in want of meanes; yet hee will never indure it under meanes. It is better for a bramble to bee in the Wilderneſſe then in an Orchard; for a weed to bee abroad, then in a garden where it is ſure to be weeded out, as the other to bee cut downe. If a man will be unprofitable, let him bee unprofitable out of the Church: but to bee ſo where hee hath the dew of grace falling on him, in the meanes of ſalvation, where are all Gods ſweet favours; to bee a bramble in the Orchard, to bee a weed in the Garden, to be noyſome in a place where wee ſhould bee fruitfull, will God the great Husbandman indure this? He will not long put it up; but that hee exerciſeth his children with ſuch noyſome trees to trie them, as hee hath ſome ſervice for theſe thornes to doe, to ſcratch them: ſo were it not for ſuch like ſervices for a time, hee would weed them out and burne them, for whatſoever is not for fruit is for the fire: *Yea, every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, ſhall bee hewen downe and caſt into the fire.*

Mat. 3. 10.

And the more to ſtirre us up hereunto, let us know

know that whereſoever the *dew* of grace falls, and where there is the meanes of ſalvation, that at that very time, there is an axe, an inſtrument of vengeance laid to the roote of the tree, which is not ſtruck downe preſently, but *it is laid to the roote*, that is vengeance is threatned to the tree, to that plant which hath the meanes, and brings not forth good fruit in time and ſeaſon. What is the end thereof? to be hewen downe and caſt into the fire. As wee ſee the Church of the *Iewes*, when Chriſt came, the *Meßias*, the great Prophet of the Church, never was there more meanes of ſalvation: yet even then, what ſaith *Iohn Baptiſt*, *Now*, even now, *is the axe laid unto the roote of the tree*; and indeed in a few yeares after, the whole tree, the Church of *Iewes* was cut downe. And *Revel. 6.* we ſee, after the Rider on the *white horſe*, which is the preaching of the *Goſpell*, there comes a *red bloodie Horſe*, and a *pale Horſe*: *Warre* and *Famine*. After the *white Horſe*, his triumphant Chariot, the preaching of the Goſpell: if this take not place, that it winne and gaine not: what followes after? the red and the pale Horſe, Warre, Famine, and Deſtruction. It will not be alway with us as it is; for the Goſpell having beene ſo long preached, we having beene ſo long planted in Gods Paradice the Church: if we beare not fruit, *The axe is laid to the roote of the tree*: God will ſtrike at the roote, and roote up all, therfore let every one in their place bee fruitfull.

Every

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The beneſit of fruitfullneſſe.

Deut 20.19,20.

Every one that is fruitfull, God hath a ſpeciall care of. If any tree were fruitfull, the *Iſraelites* in their conqueſts were to ſpare that, becauſe it was uſefull, and they might have uſe of it. So God will alwaies ſpare fruitfull trees, and have a ſpeciall care of ſuch in common calamities. Let us therefore be exhorted not only to bring forth fruit, but to bring forth fruit in abundance, to ſtudie to excell in good workes, the word in the Originall is, *A Standerdbearer:* to ſtand before others in good workes. As it is in *Titus*, labour to be as *Standerdbearers*, to goe before others in good workes: ſtrive to outgoe others in fruitfullneſſe; for therein is the excellency. For thoſe both in the ſight of God and men are in moſt eſteeme, who are moſt fruitfull in their callings and places. The more wee excell in fruitfullneſſe, the more wee excell in comfort: and the more we excell this way, the more we may excell: for God will tend and prune good trees, that they may bring forth more and better fruit. And the more majeſty we walke with, the more wee dampe the enemies, ſeeing them all under our feete; a growing Chriſtian never wants abundance of incouragement, for hee ſees ſuch grounds of comfort, as that he walkes impregnable and invincible in all the diſcouragements of this world, breaking through all, as *Salomon* ſaith, it is a comely thing to ſee a Lyon walke: ſo much more it is to ſee a valiant ſtrong well-growen Chriſtian (who is bold as a Lyon) abound in good workes.

Titus 3.8.

John 15.2.

Pro.30.30.

It

It is ſaid, *His beauty ſhall bee as the Olive, and his ſmell as Lebanon*; the Olive of it ſelfe hath no ſweet ſmell, therefore it is made up by another reſemblance.

His ſmell ſhall bee as Lebanon.

Lebanon ſtood on the North ſide of *Iudea*; and was a place abounding with goodly trees, and all ſweet plants whatſoever, which caſt a wondrous ſweet ſent and ſmell a farre off: as ſome Countries abound ſo in ſweet fruits and ſimples, as Oranges, Lemmans and the like, that the fragrancie of the ſmell is ſmelt of paſſengers as they ſaile along the Coaſt. So was this *Lebanon* a place full of rare fruits and fragrant flowers, which caſt a ſent a farre of. Now, hence the Holy Ghoſt fetcheth the compariſon; *They ſhall ſmell as Lebanon*: that is, as thoſe plants in *Lebanon* which caſt a ſweet and delightfull ſmell a farre off: whence wee will onely obſerve this,

That a Chriſtian by his fruitfullneſſe doth delight others. *Obſerv.*

He is ſweet to God and man, as the *Olive* and the *Vine* ſpeake of their fruitfullneſſe, *They delight God and man.* So a Chriſtian, both alive and dead he is pleaſing and delightfull to the ſpirits of others, to God, and all that have the Spirit of God. As for God himſelfe, wee know that workes of mercy are as it were a ſweet odour; he is delighted with good works, as with Sacrifice, ſmelling a ſweet ſavour from them, and their prayers aſcend as ſweet incenſe

Iud. 9. 9, 13.

Phil. 4. 18.

Pſal. 141. 2.

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before him. Every good worke is pleaſing and delightfull to God, who dwels in an humble heart, and broken ſpirit: The upright are his delight. We ſee likewiſe how Chriſt commends the graces of his Church, which whole booke is full of praiſes in this kinde one of another. The Church ſets out the praiſes of Chriſt, and Chriſt the praiſes of the Church. The Church is ſweet, *O let me heare thy voice for it is ſweet and lovely*; The Churches voice is ſweet praying to God or praiſing him. So whatſoever comes from the Spirit of God in the hearts of his children is ſweet, God laies to heart the voice of his children.

Pro. 11.20.

Cant. 2.14.

And as it is true of God, ſo is it of Gods people, they are delighted with the ſavour of thoſe things that come from other of Gods people. For they have graces in them, and therewith the Spirit of God which is as fire to ſet a worke all thoſe graces in them. For it is the nature of fire where it incounters with ſweet things, to kindle them and make them ſmell more fragrant and ſweet. So a Spirit of love makes all ſweet and pleaſing whatſoever in the children of God: it puts a gracefullneſſe upon their words; making their reproofes, admonitions, comforts, and whatſoever comes from them to have a delightfullneſſe in them: becauſe all is done in love, and comes from the Spirit of God, which carrieth a ſweetneſſe in it, to all thoſe endowed with the ſame Spirit.

Let

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Let this be an incouragement to be in love with the ſtate of Gods children, that ſo our workes and whatſoever comes from us as farre as it is ſpirituall, may bee acceptable unto God, and to the Church while we are living, nay when we are dead. The very workes of holy men when they are dead, are as a box of oyntment, as the oyntment of the Apothecary, as the wiſe-man ſayes of *Ioſiah*, whoſe very name was like the oyntment of the Apothecarie. So the name of thoſe who have ſtood out for good, and have beene good in their times, it carries a ſweetneſſe with it when they are gone. The Church of God riſeth out of the aſhes of the Martyrs, which hitherto ſmels ſweet and puts life in thoſe who come after: ſo pretious are they both dead and alive. *Vſe.1.*

And then, let it be an incouragement to be led by Gods Spirit, and planted in Gods houſe and to be fruitfull in our places, that ſo we may delight God and man, and when we are gone leave a good ſent behind us. Good men, as it were with their good ſent they leave behinde, them perfume the times, which are the better for them dead and alive. What a ſweet favour hath *Paul* left behind him by his writings to the Church, even to the end of the world? what fragrancie of delightfull ſmels have the holy ancient Fathers and Martyrs left behinde them? a good man ſhould be like the box of oyntment ſpoken of in the Goſpell, which when it was opened, the whole houſe *Vſe.2.* *Mat.26.*

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was filled with the ſweetneſſe thereof, ſo a good man ſhould labour to bee full of ſweetneſſe, willingneſſe and abilities to doe good, all kindled by a Spirit of love in him, that when he is opened, all ſhould bee pleaſing and delightfull that commeth from him. Chriſt never opened his mouth but good came from him, and the Heavens never opened in vaine: therefore in opening of our mouthes, we ſhould labour to fill the places where we are with a good ſavour. O how contrary is this to the condition of many, what comes from them? filthy ſpeeches and oaths, nay that which ſhould be their ſhame they glory in. Wee ſee it is the glory of a tree to be fruitfull, and to caſt forth a good ſavour, like the trees of *Lebanon*. What vile ſpirits then are ſuch men led withall, who delight to offend God and man by their impious ſpeeches? who yet are ſo bold as to ſhew their faces, to outdare others that are better then themſelves: ſuch are contrary to all Gods ſenſes. The Scripture condeſcends ſo farre to our capacitie, as to attribute ſenſes unto God, of feeling, ſmelling and touching, *&c.* So God is ſaid to looke upon his children with delight, and to heare their prayers. *Let me heare thy voice*, &c. And he taſtes the fruit that comes from them. So on the contrary, all his ſenſes are annoyed with wicked men and vile perſons, who are abhominable to God, as the Scripture ſpeakes. As a man that goes by a ſtinking dung-hill ſtops his noſe and cannot endure the ſent. So the blaſphe-

Cant. 2. 14.

mous

mous breath of graceleſſe perſons, it is abhominable to God, as it were, God cannot endure ſuch an odious ſmell, and for his *eyes* he cannot endure iniquity, to looke upon the wicked, and for his *eares*, their prayers are abhominable, how abhominable then are their perſons whence thoſe prayers proceed? they have proud hearts hating God and man, wherefore praying out of neceſſity not love to him, they are abhominable. And ſo for *feeling*, your ſacrifices are a burthen unto me, I cannot beare them, and the Prophet complaineth that God was burthened and loaded under their ſinnes, as a cart preſſed till it be readie to breake under the ſheaves. All his ſenſes are offended with wicked men. This hardned wretches thinke not off, that whilſt God fils their bellies with good things, goe on in ſecurity, but the time will come, when they ſhall know the truth of theſe things, what it is to leade an odious abhominable life, contrary to God and all good men. Hence we ſee what wee ſhould bee, that wee may give a ſweet ſent: *His ſmell ſhall be as Lebanon.*

Hab. 1. 13.

Iſa. 1. 11.

Amos. 2. 13.

Wicked men know this very well, that the lives, ſpeeches, and courſes of good men for the moſt part are fruitfull beyond theirs, therefore what they can, they labour to caſt aſperſions upon them that they may not ſmell ſo ſweet, ſo crying downe thoſe who are better then themſelves, that they may be the leſſe ill thought of: and ſetting a price upon all things

in themſelves and their companions. Take me a knot of curſed companions, and they are the onely ſtout, the onely wiſe and learned men, all learning it muſt live and die with them: and all other men, though incomparable beyond them in abilities, in grace, in fruitfulneſſe to doe good, they are no body, and this pollicie the Divell teacheth them. But this will not ſerve the turne, for God both in life, and after death will raiſe up the eſteeme of ſuch who have beene fruitfull, when, *The memorie of the wicked ſhall rot*, and not be mentioned without a kinde of loathing. Therefore let no man truſt to this fooliſh policie, to cry downe all others that are better then themſelves, thinking thereby themſelves ſhall be better eſteemed. This will not doe, for as all other things, ſo our good name is at Gods diſpoſing. It is not in the world to take away the good name or acceptance of good people; for they ſhall have the in ſpight of world, a place in the hearts of Gods people, who are beſt able to judge. The next thing promiſed is,

Pro. 10. 7.

They that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall returne.

The Holy Ghoſt it ſeemes cannot expreſſe in words and compariſons enough the excellent condition of the Church and of the Children of God, when they are once brought into the ſtate of Grace. The former words concerne the excellencie of the Children of God in themſelves

ſelves: and theſe the fruitfullneſſe and goodneſſe of them that are under them, who ſhall be brought into the families and places where they live. *They that dwell under his ſhadow*, under the ſhadow of Iſraell, *ſhall returne and revive as the corne: and grow as the Vine*, &c. For ſo it is moſt fitly meant of Iſraell. For formerly it is ſaid. *I will bee as the Dew unto Iſraell.* Originally it is meant of Chriſts ſhadow; but becauſe whoſoever dwells under the Churches ſhadow, dwels under Chriſts, therefore it is fitly applyed to Iſraell: *They that dwell under Iſraels ſhadow ſhall returne.* What returning? Returne to God by Repentance, this is ſuppoſed: for thoſe that dwell in the Church of God, if they belong to God, by the helpe of good meanes they ſhall attaine to reformation and Repentance. But it is eſpecially meant of that which followes upon it, *They ſhall returne*; that is, they ſhall revive, as a mans ſpirits after a ſwound are ſaid to returne, and things after a ſeeming decay and deadneſſe are ſaid to be quickned and returne againe. So all that dwell under the ſhadow of Iſraell, they ſhall returne to God by Repentance: *They ſhall Returne*, having a greater vigor and livelineſſe, recovering that which they ſeem'd to have loſt before.

They that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall Returne.

When God will bleſſe any people he will bleſſe all that belong to them, and are under

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them, becauſe they are bleſſed in bleſſing them, even as we are touched when our children are ſtricken: God ſtrikes the father in the child, the husband in the wife, the maſter in the ſervant, becauſe there is ſome relation and dependance betwixt them. As it is in ill, ſo it is in good, God bleſſeth the father in the child, the King in the ſubject, and the ſubject in the King God bleſſeth one in another. And in bleſſing becauſe God loves the Church, all the friends of the Church are the better for it. They

Pſal. 122.6. proſper that love the Church, though they be not members of it, all that bleſſe *Abraham* ſhall be bleſſed, though they bee not actually good, yet if they wiſh him well, a bleſſing is promiſed. So when God bleſſeth a man to purpoſe, he bleſſeth all that belong to him, all that be under his ſhadow fare the better. The point to be handled is this

Obſerv. *That the Church it ſelfe yeelds a ſhadow*, being ſhadowed it ſelfe by Chriſt, who ſpreads his wing over it. Now what is the uſe of a ſhadow.

1. *It is for a retiring place to reſt in.*

2. *It is for Defence againſt the extreamitie of heate.*

3. *It is for Delight*, If the ſhades be good and wholeſome,

For as Philoſophers expreſſe the Nature of trees, there be ſome trees which yeeld noyſome ſhadowes, ſome trees have a heavie noxious dangerous ſhadow, becauſe there comes a ſent from

from the tree (as Naturaliſts obſerve) which annoyes the braines. But he ſpeakes heere of good trees. Iſraell is a tree that yeelds a ſhadow unto all, that is all that are under Iſraell ſhall reſt quietly, and not be annoyed with the heate of Gods wrath and the like, they ſhall bee delighted having a ſweet refreſhing under the Church.

God in Scripture is often ſaid to be a ſhadow, and his people to be under *the ſhadow of his wings*. But God and the Church are all one in this, for they that are under the Churches ſhadow, are under Gods ſhadow, for the Church is Chriſts, and Chriſt Gods. Therefore to be under the Church, is to be under God, and to be in the Church, is to bee under Gods protection. They both agree, as we ſee *Micah* 5. 7. The Church is ſaid to bee *Dew*, becauſe God be-dewes the Church, and the Church be-dewes others, and heere the Promiſe is, *I will be as the Dew unto Iſraell*, Where the ſame name is attributed unto God. Chriſt is a *vine*, and the Church is a *vine*; Chriſt is a *Dew* and a ſhadow, ſo is the Church; becauſe Chriſt communicates his excellencies to her, and ſhe hers unto others. Therefore there can be no offence in applying this to the Church: which is the proper meaning of the place, for the Church is a ſhadow for reſt and freedome from annoyance, unto all that come under her.

Pſal. 36. 7.

Ioh. 15. 1.

Queſt. To cleere this a little: what ſolace and reſt doe men finde under the ſhadow of the Church.

There

SER. VIII.

Anſw.

There is a reſt and a peace in the Church, for all things are at peace with the Church, even the very ſtones in the field, nothing can hurt the Children of the Church, *God will bee and is a Sunne and a ſhield unto them*; a ſhield to keepe off all ill, and a Sunne to conferre all good unto them. So his promiſe is to *Abraham*; *I will be thy Buckler and thine exceeding great reward.* A *Buckler* to keepe ill from him, and *an exceeding great reward* for good. Therefore it is a ſweet ſhadow to bee under the Church, where God is all in all to them, who makes all things worke for good unto them, even the greateſt evill. Now what a delightfull thing is it to have a reſting place with them, which either ſuffer no ill, or God turnes all ill to their great good? where God is a *Sun* and a *ſhield*, a *Buckler*, and an *exceeding great reward*, as he is to his Church and Children?

Job. 5. 23.

Pſa. 84. 11.

Gen. 15. 1.

And then againe, God is about his Church, as a wall of fire to protect it, not onely as a ſhadow to keepe of ſtormes, but as a wall of fire to keepe off and conſume enemies. God in regard of protection of his Church, is a compaſſing unto them: as it is in *Iob*, ſaith Satan, *Haſt thou not made a hedge about him and all that he hath?* There was a hedge about *Iob*, his wife, children and goods, which the Divell durſt not enter, nor make a gap in, untill God gave him leave. Therefore, thoſe that are under the ſhadow of the Church, they are ſafe, and may reſt quietly.

Zach. 2. 5.

Iob. 1. 10.

But

But this is eſpecially underſtood ſpiritually, the Church is a ſhadow, and her ſelfe under a ſhadow ſpiritually: that is, in regard of ſpirituall evills from the worſt enemies. For out of the Church, where is any fence for the greateſt ill of all, *The wrath of God?* In the Church of God there is ſet downe a way of pacification, how the wrath of God is taken of and appeaſed in reconciliation, by the death and ſufferings of Jeſus Chriſt; whereby the beleeving ſoule attaineth peace and joy unſpeakable and glorious Out of the Church there is no meanes at all to pacifie the greateſt ill, therefore there is no true reſt out of the Church, nothing but ſtings and torments of conſcience. And as there is a ſhelter againſt the wrath of God, which burnes to the bottome of Hell: ſo here is a remedie againſt death and damnation: for now death is made a friend to the Church and the children of the Church, for the ſting of it is taken away, ſo that it doth them more good then any thing in the world: ending all their miſery, and ſinning, and opening a paſſage unto eternall happineſſe. All other petty ills that attend upon death are nothing: there is a reſt from all theſe whatſoever: for all afflictions have a ſanctified uſe to Gods people for their good. There is therefore a reſt and refreſhing in the Church, for all thoſe that come under it.

And as this is true of the Church in generall, ſo it is true of particular families that are little Churches, there is reſt and happineſſe in them: God

God bleſſeth all under the roofe of a godly man, whoſoever comes under that ſhadow comes for a bleſſing or for further hardning: we ſee in the current of Scripture ordinarily, that when God converted any one man, he converted his whole family, *Salvation is this day come to thy houſe,* (ſaith Chriſt) to *Zaccheus*; when ſalvation came to his heart, it came to his houſe, all was the better for it. So the *Iaylor*, when he beleeved, he and his whole houſe were Baptiſed: when God bleſſeth the governor once, then it is ſuppoſed all the houſe comes under the covenant of grace. *Abraham* and his houſe were bleſſed. But this holds not alwaies, for there was a *Cham* in good *Noahs* family, ſtill there will be Ravens and wilde beaſts, among the tame beaſts: there will be an *Iſhmaell* in *Abrahams* family, a *Doeg* in the Church of *Iuda*, a *Iudas* in Chriſts family, and a *Demas* among Gods people. That is, let the family be never ſo good, you ſhall have ſome by Gods judgement naught in the ſame. As it is ſaid of *Ieremiahs* figs, the good figs were exceeding good, and the bad exceeding bad. There is none ſo good as thoſe that are in a gratious family, and none ſo nought, as ſuch who are naught there. Becauſe they are curſed and under a curſe being bad under ſuch gratious meanes: being like the ground which receives the raine and ſhowers from Heaven, and yet is not the better for it, and ſo is accurſed. If a man who is untoward were in a gratious family,

Luk. 19.9.

Act. 16.33.

Ier. 24.1.

Heb. 6 7,8.

is

it is ſuppoſed he would be better, but thoſe who are naught where they ſhould be good, under abundance of meanes, ſuch are in danger to be ſealed to eternall deſtruction. Such being bad, are very bad, who though they breake not out to dangerous enormities, becauſe of the place; yet to have a barren untractable heart under aboundance of meanes, is to be hardened to deſtruction, without a ſpeciall mercie to make it worke afterwards. For ſome who have lived in gratious families, though for the preſent the ſeed fructified not; yet have afterwards found that ſeed fructifie after a long time, and have bleſſed God that ever they came under ſuch a ſhadow: therefore though ſuch barrenneſſe be a dangerous ſigne, yet muſt we not ſuddenly either condemne our ſelves or others in this caſe. Becauſe in the things of God in the Church, it is as in nature, the ſeed ſprings not as ſoone as it is ſowen: ſo that grace at length which hath ſeem'd to lie dead, after many yeares may ſprout out. *Monica* Saint *Auſtins* mother, was a gratious woman, whilſt hee was an untoward young man, as appeareth by his own confeſſions: yet his mother having prayed much for him, he was converted after her death and became a glorious Father and inſtrument of the Churches good. It is ordinary amongſt us, many when they have gone aſtray, reflect home upon themſelves, conſider under what meanes they have beene, calling to minde the gratious inſtructions they have had

had, and ſo by Gods aſſiſtance are new men. Therefore let none deſpaire, in regard of time or place; becauſe God may have further aimes then we can reach too; but unleſſe God give a ſpeciall bleſſing after ſuch watering, it is for the increaſe of condemnation, not to profit under ſuch abounding meanes, but ſtill to be like *Pharoahs* leane kine, full fed and leane ſtill. For the Promiſe is: *Thoſe that are under his ſhadow ſhall returne.*

Gen 41.

There is here a fit occaſion offered to ſpend much time in preſſing care upon thoſe that are Governours, that even out of love unto thoſe that are under them, they would labour to bee gratious: becauſe if they be gratious, God will give them thoſe that are in their family. The whole family was baptiſed when the Maſter was baptiſed, and when any man was called, the whole family came within the covenant. When *Shechem* and *Hamor* were circumciſed, all the cittie was circumciſed alſo. It is true eſpecially of Governours, there is no man that hath grace for himſelfe alone: God gives ſpeciall graces to ſpeciall perſons to be a meanes to draw on many others. Whereſoever grace is, it is of a ſpreading nature: it is ſaid here of ſuch, their *Branches ſhall ſpread:* It is communicative, and of a piercing nature, a little whereof will worke ſtrangely. As we know a little ſhort ſpeech of a poore maid to *Naaman* the *Aſſyrian* how it wrought, and was the occaſion of his converſion. So a little ſavoury ſpeech will often

Gen 34.24.

2 King. 5.3.

often miniſter occaſion of many heavenly thoughts: God ſo aſſiſts it with his Spirit, that it often doth a great deale of good.

But why are all in the family the better for the Governour that is good? *Queſt.*

Becauſe God gives them grace and wiſdome to walke holily before them, and to ſhine as lights, expreſſing and ſhewing forth the vertues of God which they have felt: as we ſee *David* profeſſeth, *Pſal.* 101. to walke ſingularly and exactly in all things in the perfect way: that ſo he might pleaſe God and men, ſhining out before them in an holy glorious converſation in the midſt of his family. And as by their *example*, ſo by their authority they uſe to bring all under them to outward obedience at the leaſt, which bringeth a bleſſing to the family. Becauſe when grace is once kindled in the Maſter, he will ſee all at leaſt come to outward conformity. They cannot worke grace in them, but as the Prophet ſpeakes they may compell them to uſe the meanes; or elſe not to ſuffer a wicked and untoward perſon to dwell under their ſhadow. We know why God ſaid that he would not conceale his ſecrets from *Abraham*, becauſe he knew he would inſtruct and teach his family in the feare of God: ſo this may be ſaid of every one that is an *Abraham*, a Governour of a family; they labour to tell them all things that have done good to themſelves, therefore they are the better for living under their ſhadow. Nay further, not onely the *Anſw.* Gen. 18. 19.

SER. VIII.

the Governour of the family, but if there be any gratiouſly good in the family, they doe much good. *Labans* family was the better for *Iacob*: and *Potiphar*, he and the *Iaylor* both proſpered the better for *Ioſephs* ſake; ſo *Naaman* that great Captaine fared the better for his poore maid. It is a true poſition, God ſtabliſheth grace in none who are gratious, for themſelves meerely, but for the good of others alſo that converſe with them: whether it bee Governours or ſervants: no man liveth to himſelfe, and for himſelfe onely; but for the good of all within their reach.

Gen. 30. 27.

Gen. 39. 5. 23.

Vſe. 1. For Uſe therfore, firſt this ſhall be for incouragement to all Governours of families to bee good, if not for themſelves, yet in love to thoſe that are theirs. It may be ſome have no care of their owne ſoules, or good. But haſt thou no care of thy children, of thy wife that lieth in thy boſome, or of thy ſervants? if thou haſt not a heart of ſtone or marble, ſurely thou wouldeſt deſire that for them, that thou doſt not for thy ſelfe: thinke of this, at leaſt thou wouldeſt have thy children good and proſper. Labour then if we would have all proſper who come under our roofe, that our families may be little Churches of God, that all who come under our ſhadow may revive and returne. Therefore out of love to thoſe that belong to us, let us labour to be good. Is it not a pittifull thing, that ſome who are Governours of others, they looke to them as to beaſts, and

uſe

uſe their ſervice, as a man would uſe the ſervice of his beaſt, they feed their bodies and thinke they have no charge of their ſoules. Now this is one reaſon why all that come under the ſhadow of a good Governour are the better, becauſe they take care for their inſtruction and beſt good, that they live in obedience to Gods Ordinances, and not like wilde creatures, ruffians, vagabonds, Cains and the like. What a ſtrange thing is this to have a care of the body the worſer part, and neglect the more excellent part, their ſoules?

Make wee alſo this Uſe of Tryall, art thou a good and a gratious Governour indeed, then grace in thy heart is communicative, it will ſpread over thy family, thou wilt labour to make thy children and thy ſervants good, to make all good that come under thy roofe. Other things are not alwayes communicative, gold is a dead thing, and other goods thou mayeſt keepe by thee, which doe not ſpread. But if thou haſt the beſt good, Faith and Love, with a gratious heart; this is like oyle, or like fire which will not be held in, but out and ſhew themſelves they will, and ſhine in their kinde. So grace is a ſpreading communicative thing: all that come therefore under the ſhadow of a gratious family, are ſaid to returne and be the better for it. Make this therefore an uſe of Tryall whether thou be a gratious Governour or not, if thou canſt ſay with *Ioſhua*, when he called the people togther, ſaith he doe what

Vſe. 2.

you will, J know what I will doe, *I and my houſe will ſerve the Lord.* If you will be Idolaters or ſo and ſo: *but I and my houſe will ſerve the Lord*; ſo certainely there is no man who in truth of heart feares the Lord, but he is able to ſay, *I and my houſe will ſerve the Lord.*

Ioſh. 24. 15.

Vſe. 3. Laſtly, for Terrour, let us behold the dangerous and curſed eſtate of thoſe that dwell out of Chriſts ſhadow, the Church and good meanes, who lie open to the indignation of God and ſtorme of his wrath. Who howſoever they may bleſſe themſelves in a thing of naught: yet it is a fearefull thing to lie under a curſe: and that ſoule muſt needs be barren where the *dew* of grace fals not; for God uſually derives ſpirituall and heavenly things by outward meanes. *They that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall returne.* They ſhall returne to God, and by returning to him, returne as it were and revive. As when in a ſwoond, a mans ſpirits returne againe, hee is ſaid to revive. But the ground of *Returning* is, that they ſhall returne to God and come under his roofe in the Church. But more immediately this is true, *they ſhall returne*, and ſhall quicken and revive in returning. Which wee ſpake of in the beginning of the Chapter. Onely this ſhall be added to that; that a wicked man out of judgment of the danger of his eſtate may make a ſtop: but turning is more then ſo: in this caſe a man turnes his face to God and heaven-wards, to good things formerly neglected, on which he turned his backe formerly. What

is

is *turning*, but a change of poſture, when the face is turned towards that the backe was to before? So it is in this ſpirituall turning to God: when heavenly things are in our face, when God and *Hieruſalem* the Church are in our eye ſtill, minding heavenly things and not earthly, then we are ſaid to returne. And therefore theſe converts mentioned in *Ieremie*, are thus deſcribed in their converſion, *asking the way to Zion with their faces thither-ward:* whereas before in the dayes of our corruption we turned our backs to God, now when we returne, we *ſet the Lord alwayes before us* in every thing: this is properly to returne, to revive and flouriſh alſo in returning. Thus wee have heard how all who live under the ſhadow of Chriſt doe returne, and what uſe wee ſhould make of it.

Ier. 50. 5.

Pſal. 16. 8.

* * *

The end of the eighth Sermon.

THE NINTH SERMON.

Hos. 14. 6.

They that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall returne; they ſhall revive as the Corne, and grow as the Vine, the ſent thereof ſhall be as the Vine of Lebanon.

OUR deſire of good things is not ſo large as God is bountifull in ſatisfying our deſires, & going beyond them, as we ſee in this Chapter, their hearts were too narrow to receive all that good which God intended them. *Receive us graciouſly,*

this was their petition: whereunto God anſwers, *that hee would be as the dew unto them, that they ſhould grow as the Lillie, and caſt forth their roote as Lebanon: and their branches ſhall ſpread:* that they ſhould grow in all dimenſions, upwards and downwards, and ſpread in beauty and ſmell, *Their beauty ſhall be like the Olive, and their ſmell like Lebanon.* And becauſe he would be God-like, like himſelfe, that is throughly and abundantly gratious and mercifull, he doth not only (as we have heard) promiſe a bleſſing to Iſraell himſelfe, but unto all neere unto him and belonging to him: *Thoſe that are under his ſhadow ſhall returne, they ſhall revive as the corne.*

We are all too ſhallow to conceive either the infinite vaſtneſſe of Gods juſtice to impenitent ſinners, or his boundleſſe mercy and goodneſſe to his poore Church and children. Therefore God to helpe our weake conceit in this kinde borroweth all the excellencies of nature, and makes uſe of them in grace. He takes out of the booke of nature into his booke what may inſtruct our ſoules: and therefore ſets downe the growing eſtate of a Chriſtian by all excellent compariſons that nature will afford, many whereof we have gone over, the laſt we ſpake of was, that mercy which God ſuperabundantly ſhewes unto the friends and ſervants of the Church, *Thoſe that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall returne.* Now thoſe that ſhall thus *returne*, they *revive in returning*: for they turne to the fountaine of life, to the Sonne of Righteouſneſſe:

they

they come under Gods grace, therefore they muſt needs *returne* and *revive* in vigor, as they returne to God: which vigor is eſpecially meant here, when he ſaith, *Thoſe that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall returne.*

They ſhall revive as the corne.

Now how doth the corne revive? not to ſpeake of that compariſon that the godly are corne and not chaffe, as the wicked are, who are driven too and fro without any ſolidity, which though true, is not here eſpecially aimed at. For it is ſuppoſed that they who are good and gratious have a ſubſtance, ſoliditie, uſefulneſſe and goodneſſe in them like the corne; not being emptie chaffe, which the wind blowes away. This is uſefull to mention: but to come to the ſcope intended by the Prophet. Pſal. 1.

They ſhall revive as the corne, In this firſt, that as the corne when unſowne it lies dead in the granarie, fructifieth not, but when it is ſown ſprings up to an hundred fold, as we reade of in *Iſaacks* time, who received ſo much increaſe. So it is with converted Chriſtians before they were under any gratious meanes, or in a good place, they lay as it were dead and did not ſpring forth. But afterwards being planted and ſowen under gratious meanes, in good company in a good family, then they increaſe and grow up and multiplie: *They revive like the Corne.* 1. Gen. 26. 12.

And then againe as it is with the Corne, though it ſeeme to die, and doth indeed die in 2.

ſome ſort, covered with winter ſtormes ere it ſpring out from the oppreſſions of froſt and ſnow, and hard weather, as if it were altogether periſhed: yet notwithſtanding it is all the while a preparing for ſpringing up againe more glorioufly. So it is with the Church, which ſeemes to die often in regard of ſpirituall mortification by afflictions, whereby it is dead to the world: yet all this while, there is a bleſſed life in the ſpirit, preparing the ſoule under the hard preſſures of all weathers, to a glorious ſpringing up againe. Therefore the Church hath no hurt by afflictions, no more then the corne hath by the winter, which is as neceſſary for it, as the ſpring-time, or ſummer. For elſe, how ſhould the earth be ripened and prepared? how ſhould the wormes and weeds bee killed, if it were not for hard weather? So it is with a Chriſtian, thoſe afflictions that he ſuffers, and under which he ſeemes to be buried, they are as uſefull to him as all his comforts. Nay a Chriſtian is more beholding to afflictions for his graces and comforts, then he is to outward bleſſings. One would thinke that the goldſmith were a ſpoyling his plate when he is a burning of it, when all that while the droſſe is but a conſuming out of it; and the veſſell ſo hammered and beaten out, is but a preparing to be a veſſell of honour to ſtand before ſome great man. So it is with a Chriſtian: an ignorant perſon looking but one way, thinks God neglects ſuch a one, and that if God cared for ſuch

ſuch a one, or ſuch a one, would or could ſuch and ſuch things befall them? they conclude hence (as the Pſalmiſt ſaith) *God hath forſaken him*, and forgotten him. And as Chriſt the head of the Church was thought to be forgotten and neglected, even when he was moſt deare and pretious unto God: ſo even they all this while, the Spirit of God is working an excellent worke in them, preparing and fitting them for grace and glory. Therefore in that reſpect alſo: *They ſhall revive as the Corne.* Pſa. 71 11.

Thirdly, *They ſhall revive as the corne in regard of fructification*; It is true both of the Church and of particular graces. We ſee one graine of corne when it is almoſt periſhed and turn'd to froth, nothing in a manner, preſently out of it ſprings a ſtalke, and thence an eare and in that many eares, God giving it a body, ſixtie or a hundred fold as he pleaſeth. So it is with a Chriſtian, when he is planted he will leaven others, and thoſe others and others. A few Apoſtles leavened the whole world, ſcattering the Goſpell like lightning all over the ſame. So it is true of grace in Gods Children, it is like a graine of muſtard-ſeed at the firſt, yet it growes up and fructifies, from knowledge to knowledge, faith to faith, and grace to grace, from vertue to vertue, from ſtrength to ſtrength, from one degree to another: nothing leſſe at firſt, and nothing more great or glorious in this world in progreſſe of time, nothing ſo admired of God, and pleaſing unto man 3. Mat. 13. 31.

SER. IX.

man: as this which makes one all glorious and without ſpot.

O! what can be ſaid more to incourage us to come under gratious meanes, to love God and his Ordinances, good company and the communion of Saints, conſidering they are ſuch happy people? *Thoſe that are under their ſhadow ſhall returne*, revive, and bee vigorous; *They ſhall revive as the corne*, which doth (when it ſeemeth to bee dead) notwithſtanding all weathers grow up and multiply. And whereas it ſeem'd dead before and lay hid, being ſowen it growes: So being planted in the Church we ſhall grow: for there is a hidden vertue in the leaſt grace, in the leaſt of Gods Ordinances, more then we are aware off (ſaith Chriſt) *Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the middeſt of them.* Much more is this made good in great Congregations and families. But this is not all, he ſaith;

Mat. 18.20.

They ſhall grow as the Vine.

Howſoever the Church which is the mother Church growes before in the former words: the new Church that comes under her ſhadow, ſhall grow in the ſame manner; *They ſhall grow as the Lillie: their Branches ſhall ſpread:* and more it is ſaid heere, *They ſhall grow as the Vine.* It is a compariſon delightfull to the Holy Ghoſt, to compare Chriſt to a Vine, the Church to a Vineyard: and Chriſtians unto vines: but ſuch as draw all their moyſture and fatneſſe in them from Chriſt the true Vine, their

their ſweetneſſe being a derivated ſweetneſſe.

They ſhall grow as the Vine.

1. *The Vine is fruitfull, ſo Chriſtians.* Iud. 9. 9, 13.

The Vine we know is a fruitfull plant: as we reade in the Judges: The *Olive* and the *Vine* would not forſake their ſweetneſſe to be a king: for it is ſaid by them, that they revive God and man, being pleaſing to them. So every true Chriſtian is like a vine for fruitfullneſſe, he is a tree of Righteouſneſſe, a plant of Gods owne planting, a vine that ſpends himſelfe in bearing fruit.

2. Againe, as it is fruitfull, ſo it is exceeding fruitfull, abounding in fruit, ſo Chriſtians are vines not onely for a little fruit that they beare: but becauſe they are aboundantly fruitfull, which is premiſed: that if they doe as they ſhould do; they ſhall be vines aboundant in the worke of the Lord:

3. Iohn. 15. 2. And further the vine as we know is never a whit the worſe for pruning, but is pruned and cut (as our Saviour ſpeakes) *that it may bring foorth the more fruit.* So the Church and people of God are never a whit the worſe for afflictions: for as the beſt vines need dreſſing and pruning, the beſt ground plowing, the beſt linnen waſhing, the beſt mettall the fire to conſume away the droſſe, the beſt things we uſe having ſomething amiſſe. So the beſt Chriſtians need dreſſing and purging from the great husbandman, whereby they are not the worſe but the better, having thereby much corruption purged

ged away from them: as the pruning of the vine, makes it not the worſe, but drawes wild things from it, which would draw away the ſtrength of the vine. A Chriſtian is the better for his afflictions, wherein the glory of the Church eſpecially conſiſts. For the Church never thrived better then in *Ægypt*, where they laboured to cruſh and to cut the vine. God brought his vine out of *Ægypt* for all this, maugre all the malice of the enemies. The Church was never more glorious in it owne ſeate, then it was in *Babylon* under the *Captivity*; how glorious then was the Church in *Daniell* and others.

4. *The Vine is rugged, and unſeemely.*

Againe, to the outward appearance, the vine is a rugged unſeemely plant, being not ſightly and beautifull to look on: yet is it aboundantly fruitfull under that unſightlines. So if we look to the outward ſtate and face of the Church, it is nothing elſe to looke to but a deformed company, defaced by affliction, live-leſſe heere (as it were) *having their life hid up with God in Chriſt*, (as the Apoſtle ſpeakes) their life heere is covered over with many afflictions, croſſes, infirmities and diſgraces, whereunto they are ſubject, like unto other men. Therefore as it was the ſtate of the head, to have no outward forme or beauty, though inwardly he was all glorious. So the beauty of the Church is inward: for outward ſhew, it being unſightly like the vine, crooked and uneven, there being nothing delightfull in it unleſſe it be in regard of

Col. 3. 3.

the

the fruit that comes from it. So it is with the Church of God and particular Chriſtians: who though in outward government they have not that pollicy and outward glory other governments have, yet there is an inward ſecret worke of Gods government of the Church by contraries, which exceeds all other pollicies, wherein he brings glory from ſhame, life by death, hee brings downe and lifts up; when he is about his excellent worke, he humbleth firſt. This is an ordinarie way, therefore wee muſt not take offence at any outward deformitie that wee ſee in the Church, and in Gods Children, when they ſeeme to bee trampled upon: they are but as vines, unſightly to the eye, they have a life, though it be a hidden one.

How God governes his Church by contraries.

It is excellently ſet downe by *Ezekiel*, what the vine is of it ſelfe, it is ſerviceable for nothing: we cannot make a pinne of it; It is ſuch a brittle wood as is good for nothing but to beare fruit. So take a Chriſtian that profeſſeth Religion, if he be not fruitfull in his place, of all men he is the worſt: of all men he is either the beſt, or the worſt: as the vine, if it beare fruit it is the beſt, though it be an unſightly tree: but otherwiſe it is fit for nothing but the fire. Therefore let no man glory in his profeſſion, that he is baptiſed, heares ſermons, and reads. But where is thy fruit? wherefore ſerves the dreſſing and pruning of the vine, but for fruit? if there be no fruit, a Chriſtian is the worſt man that

Ezek. 15.

Ser. IX.

that lives: worſt, in regard that he is bad under good meanes, and in condition he is the worſt of all men, his torment is the greater. Thoſe that are barren and unfruitfull under meanes, the time will come, that they will wiſh they had never enjoyed ſuch a teſtimony againſt themſelves.

5. And further, a vine is ſo weake that it muſt be prop'd and ſupported a long, or elſe it will lie on the ground; ſuch is the eſtate of the Church, which muſt have ſomething to fence it and under-prop it. God is the ſtrength of the Church, it is a wondrous weake plant. The Children of God are wondrous weake, and expoſed to a wonderfull deale of miſery: in regard whereof and of the injuries and weakneſſes they are expoſed too, they muſt have ſupport. A Chriſtian is compared to the ſhiftleſſe things, Sheep, Lambes, and Doves, and in the plants they are compared to the vine, which needs a ſtrong ſupport, And (as *Salomon* ſaith of the conies) though they are a weake people of themſelves, yet notwithſtanding they have a ſtrong rocke over their heads, where they are ſafe, though they bee as weake as the vine. So Gods people though they bee weake of themſelves; yet they have a ſtrong ſupport to up-hold them; God by the Ordinances of Magiſtracie and Miniſtry (eſpecially by his Spirit) keepes them up and ſupports them, that they ſpread in largeneſſe and in fruitfulneſſe.

Pro. 30. 26.

Is

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Is this ſo, then let us examine our ſelves what our fruit is: if we be vines what is our fruit? what comes from us? Certainely if we doe not ſhew foorth that fruit we ſhould in our lives and converſations, in our ſpeech, carriage and actions, when we are called to it, it is an argument that as yet the dew of Gods grace hath never fallen upon us ſo as it muſt before wee come to Heaven. As was ſaid before, a man may endure a dead plant in his ground; but in his orchard he will not. He may endure weeds in paſtures, in neglected grounds, but not in his garden. If wee be Lillies in Gods Garden, and vines in his Orchard, we muſt be fruitfull and grow, or elſe God will not endure us. Of all woes, the greateſt woe lies upon them, who enjoy plentifull and aboundant meanes and yet are not fruitfull. Mat. 11. 21.

Vſe. 1.

That we are vines, and Gods vines, it is in the next place an Uſe of Comfort; that God therefore will have a care of us, if we be fruitfull, he will have a ſpeciall care of that place where his vines are planted, if we ſee many gratious perſons, and families who are conſcionable in their practiſe and converſation, we may reſt aſſured that God the great husbandman will have a ſpeciall care of thoſe choice vines and the places they live in, they carry the bleſſing of God with them whereſoever they goe, with a ſhadow and protection, making every place the better for them. For God will care for thoſe vines which bring foorth much fruit

Vſe. 2.

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Iſa. 65. 8.

Pſal. 105. 15.

fruit; As it is in *Eſay*; *Spoile it not, for there is a Bleſſing in it*. If a Chriſtian be fruitful, and labours to be more fruitfull, God gives a prohibition, he is my vine, do him no harme: *Touch not mine annoynted, nor do my Prophets no harme*. Satan himſelf and all creatures in Heaven and in Earth, have a prohibition to touch his vines no further then ſhall be for their good. Will a man ſuffer men to come into his Orchard to break downe his vines? he will not. Surely though the ſinnes of this nation be very great: yet one thing miniſtreth hope, God hath a great many *vines* under his ſhadow and protection, many conſcionable Magiſtrates, Miniſters and people of other profeſſions; Governours of families and the like, which walke holily, God will ſpare the vineyard, even for the vines that beare fruit. A notable place amongſt others we have *Cant.* 2. 15. *Take us the Foxes and the little Foxes that ſpoile the vine: for our vines have tender grapes*. There is in every Church not onely groſſe Papiſts, and forraigne enemies, that would roote out all if it were in their power: but ſubtill foxes alſo, men that pride themſelves in diveliſh pollicie, to under-mine the Church and Children of God: who wherſoever they ſee vine or grapes, they malice that: both the meanes and grace wrought by the meanes is the object of their crueltie. Subtile foxes they are who account it a great deale of glory to be accounted pollitick men, to do miſchiefe ſecretly and cloſely in the Church:

will

will God ſuffer theſe foxes? no, he will not, *Take us the foxes, the little foxes that deſtroy the vines.* God hath young growing vines, ſo as he will not onely care for the great vines, but for the tender vines alſo. Chriſt hath a care of his Lambs, as he ſaid to *Peter, loveſt thou me* &c. *Then feed my Lambes*, my little ones. So Chriſt ſpeakes in the Goſpell of theſe little ones, *I tell you* (of a truth) that *the Angels of* theſe little ones, *behold the face of my Father*, &c. And ſo he ſpeakes in another place; *A bruiſed reed will he not breake, and ſmoaking flaxe will he not quench, untill he bring foorth judgment unto victorie.* So likewiſe he promiſeth, *that he will carry the lambes in his boſome, and gently lead them that are with young.*

Cant. 2. 5.

Joh. 21. 15.

Mat. 18. 10.

Iſa. 42. 1, 2.

Iſa. 40. 11.

The next uſe ſhall be for incouragement unto weake ones: ſhould tender and weake Chriſtians then be diſcouraged for whom God is ſo carefull? ſurely no. Put caſe they bring forth but little fruite, yet, O deſtroy it not, for a bleſſing is in it. Therfore let us not be diſcouraged if wee be Gods vines: which is knowne and diſcovered, not by the abundance of fruit only, but by the kind of our fruit alſo; if it come from the Spirit of God, and relliſh of the Spirit, though it be not in ſuch plenty: yet a vine is not a thorne, a Chriſtian is not to be diſcouraged though he bring not forth aboundance of fruit at the firſt. There are different degrees and tempers of ſoyle, and of ages in Chriſtianity, which is ſpoken to incourage thoſe that are

Vſe. 3.

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good, and yet are diſcouraged, becauſe it is not with them as with ſome other Chriſtians of their acquaintance. Know that there is no ſet meaſure of grace neceſſary to ſalvation but truth. God doth aſſigne us a meaſure of grace according to his good pleaſure, and according as he hath purpoſed to make us profitable to others in the uſe of meanes. Thoſe whom hee meanes to uſe for ſuffering or doing of great matters in the Church, thoſe he fits ſutably for that he meanes to call them to: others have not that abundance of grace, out of Gods wiſdome, who knowes beſt how to diſpenſe his owne graces to his owne glory. If we allow not our ſelves in our weakneſſes, but groane under them, hate them, and ſtrive againſt them, reaching towards perfection: in this caſe our weakneſſes ſhall not hurt our ſalvation; but God will perfect his power in our weakneſſe.

2 Cor 12. 9.

So we ſee it is not the multitude of fruit, but the ſincerity of it, if it be true, that makes a Chriſtian; if there be truth of grace, it will out and ſpread the branches, it ſhall not alwayes be ſo with us. Sincerity and indeavour to grow, with a deſire and thirſt after growth, makes a man a Chriſtian. Therefore as was ſaid, we muſt not be diſcouraged, though our growth and ſpreading be not like others. Every Chriſtian hath his meaſure, though every one be bound to goe further and further, from faith to faith, and grace to grace: yet there is a bleſſing in a little, and a promiſe alſo to him that uſeth it

it well: *To him that hath it ſhall be given.* Chriſt hath a care that the foxes doe not hurt the little tender grapes; let none therfore be diſcouraged for their non-proficiency in the wayes of God, ſo as to goe backe and leave off, he knowes beſt when and how to take away the bates, ſnares and temptations that are ſet to catch them, and diſcourage them. Let God alone with his owne worke, who is the great vinedreſſer: doe thou thine owne worke, attend upon good meanes, waite upon God, and then let the malice of the world and the Divell be what they will, he will have a care of his vines, and the more care, the more young and tender they are, *&c.*

Theſe conſiderations may affect us, not only to take good by the vine for our bodies, but for our ſoules alſo, and ſo the ſame thing may cheriſh both body and ſoule. A Chriſtian by grace hath an extracting vertue, to draw holy uſes out of every thing, as the Holy Ghoſt here compares us to a vine, to teach us theſe and the like things now unfolded. The laſt thing promiſed is,

The ſent thereof ſhall be as the wine of Lebanon.

This *Lebanon* was a mountanous place, on the north ſide of *Iudea*, wondrous fruitfull in all kind of trees, in *Cedars* and goodly *Vines*, ſo it did abound in ſpice, and all goodly things. Therefore to ſhew that a Chriſtian ſhould be the beſt of his ranke, he fetches compariſons from the beſt things in nature.

The ſent thereof ſhall be as the vine of Lebanon.

Now the Vine of *Lebanon* had a ſweet ſent in it, both to draw to the liking, and then to delight in the taſt and taking thereof. So it is with the graces of God in his children, they carry as it were a ſweet ſent with them, both to draw others to delight in, and taſt of the ſame things.

Queſt. But how comes it to paſſe that Chriſtians ſend forth ſo ſweet a ſent?

Anſw. Becauſe they are in Chriſt, in whom the oyntment and all ſweetneſſe is in fulneſſe. From him the *Head* firſt, and from thence it is derived unto the members, all who muſt partake of this ointment. As it is ſaid of the head of *Aaron*, that that ointment which was powred on his head, ran downe to his skirts, and all his rich attire about. So that ſweetneſſe in Chriſt is powred on the skirts, all along upon his members, even the meaneſt Chriſtian receiveth *Grace for Grace*, ſweetneſſe from Chriſt. *The Virgins*: that is, ſuch as defile not themſelves with idolatry and ſuch other lewd courſes: they follow after Chriſt in the ſmell of his ſweet oyntments. It is ſpoken of Chriſt who carrieth ſuch a ſweet ſmell with him, as *all his garments ſmell of Myrrh, Aloes and Caſſia*, &c. So ſweet is the ſmell of Chriſt when he is unfolded in his Benefits and Offices, that the pure and holy virgin ſoules of the Saints follow after it. *His Name is as an oyntment powred out*; that is, himſelfe is his Name, and his Name is himſelfe

Pſal. 133. 2.

Iohn. 1. 16.

Cant 1. 3.

Pſal. 45. 8.

Cant. 1. 3.

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(as the Hebrew Proverbe is) Chriſt made knowne in the unfolding of the Word, that is his Name. When the box is opened, all in Chriſt is like oyntment, in the preaching of the Word all is ſweet, and nothing but ſweet in Jeſus. Now a Chriſtian being a member of Chriſt, and a virgin ſoule following Chriſt, muſt needs draw ſweetneſſe from him, caſting out that ſent unto others drawen from him, becauſe they partake of Chriſts annoynting. What is the name of a Chriſtian, but a man anoynted with Chriſts oyntment, one annoynted to be a King and a Prieſt in ſome ſort? therefore, they carry the ſavour of him whereſoever they goe. *Aaron* the high Prieſt, had ſweet garments, which made a ſavour where he went, having Bels and ſweet Pomgranates at the bottome of his garment. Hee had not onely Bels to diſcover him; but ſweet pomegranates alſo. So it is with every Chriſtian; not onely the Miniſter, but every Chriſtian is a Prieſt under the New Teſtament, and carrieth a ſavour with him, graces that ſpread and caſt a ſweet ſent in all places whereſoever, which they exerciſe upon all good occaſions: as Saint *Paul* expreſſeth it, *They ſavour the things of the Spirit.* Thoſe who are in Chriſt, they have the Spirit of Chriſt, or they are none of his. And having the Spirit of Chriſt they ſavour of the things of the Spirit, that is their thoughts, ſpeeches, actions, and converſation are ſavoury. Thoſe *that are in the fleſh* (ſaith the

Rev. 1. 6.

Exo. 39. 26.

Rom. 8. 5.

Rom. 8. 8.

Apoſtle *cannot pleaſe God*, they are unſavoury. A carnall man hath no ſavour in his ſpeeches, they are either worldly or civill, without ſpirituall ſavour: becauſe he hath nothing of the Spirit of Chriſt to ſavour off. His heart (ſaith *Salomon*) is little worth, the like we may ſay of his thoughts, actions, and affections, they are unſavoury and little worth. Hee hath a dead heart to goodneſſe, and thence whatſoever goodneſſe commeth from him is forced and againſt the haire (as we ſay) But a Chriſtian having the Spirit of Chriſt; and therewith communion with Chriſt, all his diſcourſes and actions are for the moſt part ſavoury, thoſe he acteth as a Chriſtian; therefore from his communion with Chriſt it is ſaid here, *His ſmell ſhall be as Lebanon.*

Pro. 10. 20.

The ſent thereof ſhall be as the Vine of Lebanon.

Delightfull both to God and holy bleſſed ſpirits, likewiſe to the Church, and to the Angels which are about us, and pleaſing to our owne ſpirits; for there iſſueth a wondrous contentment, even to the conſcience of a perſon which is fruitfull and aboundant in goodneſſe, that ſoule receiveth an anſwerable proportion of comfort. As it is with heate that accompanieth fire alway; ſo there is a kinde of heate of comfort, which naturally accompanieth the heate of any good action: there remaineth a ſweet reliſh to the conſcience of the performer, reflecting with Humility upon himſelfe, with thankefulneſſe to God, from whoſe *Dew*

(as

(as we have heard before) commeth whatſoever is good: reflecting on this with an eye to the principall cauſe it breeds a great deale of comfort to the ſoule. As it was ſaid of *Ioſiah*, the memory of *Ioſiah* was like the oyntment of the Apothecary, whereas one the contrary, It is ſaid, *The remembrance of the wicked ſhall rot.* Pro. 10.7.
God threatneth the Jewes, that they ſhould be a hiſſing to all nations, and that they ſhould be abhominable to all kinde of people (for what is ſo odious now as the name of a *Iew?*) Deut. 28 37.
yet certainely this whole promiſe ſhall be verified even of them: this whole Chapter having an eye unto the calling of the Iewes. The time will come that the ſent of theſe odious people (who are now the object of hatred unto all people) *ſhall bee as the Vine of Lebanon.*

If this be ſo, it cuts off a carnall exception of ſenſeleſſe perſons, that thinke they can ſtop mens mouthes with this. I cannot make ſo much ſhew as you, but J hope I have as good a heart to God as you, or as the beſt. But a Chriſtian is a *Vine*, that brings foorth grapes, and much fruit, and caſts a ſent from him (as *the ſent of Lebanon*) upon all fit occaſions. For his words ſhould be, *as the Apples of Gold ſet with pictures of ſilver.* He is ſeaſonable in his actions of Conſolation, and bringeth foorth his fruit in due ſeaſon, as the promiſe is. For *Salomon* ſheweth, that every thing is made beautifull in his ſeaſon. Thoſe therefore, that have not *Vſe.* 1. Pro. 25.11. Pſal. 1.3. Eccle. 3.11.

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a good word to ſpeake, but rather expreſſe the contrarie, rotten unſavoury diſcourſe, vaine in their converſation, ſavouring nothing that is good: how have they as good a heart to God as the beſt? No this is not to be a Chriſtian, who ſhould ſavour like *Aarons* garments, or like theſe graces comming from his head to him: who ſhould ſpread abroad his ſweetneſſe unto others, *ſhining out as a light* amongſt others? Therefore away with this baſe plea: a rotten ſpeech, argueth a rotten heart. What can come out of a veſſell but ſuch as is within it, if the iſſues be naught, what is the veſſell but naught? if all be unſavoury outward, what is there but a rotten heart within.

Mat. 12. 35.

Vſe. 2. Againe, if Chriſtians ſhould caſt a ſent and ſavour, this ſhould moove and ſtirre them up, if they will anſwer their title to be Chriſtians, ſweet, annoynted perſons, Prieſts to God, to labour more and more to be ſpirituall and ſavour the things of the Spirit: and to labour for more and more communion with Chriſt in the uſe of all ſanctified meanes, that they may have the Spirit of Chriſt in their converſation, ſhewing foorth the Humility, Patience, Love and Obedience of Chriſt. As *Peter* ſpeakes and exhorteth us, *to ſhew foorth the vertues of him who hath called us from darkeneſſe into his marvellous light.* Then we anſwer our title, and *caſt foorth a ſent like Lebanon*, when inwardly and outwardly, all things joyne to make us fruitfull and ſavoury before God and man.

1 Pet. 2. 9.

What

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What will come of it if we be fruitfull and ſavourie?

Queſt.

God will be more pleaſed in all our actions, and will *ſmell a ſweet ſavour of reſt*, as it is ſaid of *Noah* after his comming out of the *Arke*; for God delights in his owne graces, which he admireth in us. As hee ſaid to the woeman of *Canaan*, *O woeman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee as thou wilt.* God as it were ſtands admiring his owne graces, he is ſo delighted with the Faith, Love, Prayers, and Patience of his children, which is further excellently expreſſed in the *Canticles*. *Who is this that commeth up out of the wilderneſſe like pillars of ſmoake, perfumed with myrrh and frankincenſe, and all the ſpices of the merchant?* Chriſt there is brought in admiring at his Church and Children, conflicting through all the miſeries and incumbrances of this world, which hinder and oppoſe their journey to Heaven-wards, wherein they thruſt forth all the practiſe of their holy graces, which ſmell like ſpices. Then let us not envy God, the Saints, and holy people the ſweetneſſe of our graces, but let our ſent ſmell abroad to the content and comfort of all, that they may delight in theſe graces that come from us, in our Humility, Patience, Faith, Love, Sincerity, and all theſe graces wherein we reſemble Chriſt, and ſhew forth his holy vertues: therefore for our owne comfort, and the delight of all, and to aſſure our ſelves of Heaven, and of the love of God whilſt we live here, let us labour

Anſw. 1.

The excellency of a ſavoury and fruitfull converſation.

Mat 15.28.

Cant. 3.6.

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bour to be fruitfull in our converſations, and to caſt forth a ſent in regard of others, which hath an attractive drawing force. For when they ſee a holy, fruitfull and gratious converſation, it caſts forth a ſent and makes others like Religion: So God is glorified, and Religion is adorned. What greater ornament to Religion then to ſee a fruitfull gratious Chriſtian who hath ability and a heart to doe good upon all occaſions, with an humble meeke peaceable ſpirit, taught of God to be ſo for the good and love of others?

Cant. 5.

That a little gratious converſation is more winning then many words.

There muſt be Pomegranates with bells, a ſweet converſation with words, a little wherof will doe more good to others then a great many words. A good converſation is ſweet, and hath a kind of oratorie joyned with it. Therefore if neither for God, or Chriſt, or others, yet for our owne ſakes and the reflection of that good ſent upon our ſelves, let us be fruitfull. A man cannot grow in fruitfullneſſe, but hee muſt needs grow in comfort, Peace and Joy. Nothing cheereth and ſolaceth the heart of a Chriſtian more then this, the conſcience that God honoureth him to be fruitfull, to doe good, and caſt a ſweet ſavor to draw others to good things. This will comfort us upon our death-beds, more then all other things. Therefore in all theſe reſpects; for love of God, others, and our ſelves, which are delighted with the expreſſions of our graces, let us labour to be fruitfull trees in Gods garden, and to bring forth

forth much fruite, that we may ſend forth *a ſent like Lebanon.*

Now who would not be in ſuch an eſtate and condition as this; as to have title to all theſe gratious promiſes, for the *dew* of *Grace* to fall upon him, *To grow as Lillies* in height, and to ſpread as other plants doe, to grow upwards, and downewards, to be *rooted* as *Cedars*, and *fruitfull* as *Vines*. The Spirit of God ſets himſelfe here to ſhew Spirituall things by Earthly compariſons, to make us the more capable of them. The miſery of the contrary condition may well ſtirre us up to ſeeke after the foremen-tioned. For what a miſery is it, to have the curſe of God upon ones ſoule, to have it like the barren wilderneſſe void of all grace and comfort that may delight others, or is ſpirituall, ſavoury, or ſavingly good? So all theſe promiſes tend to incourage us to be in the condition of Gods Children, that when we are in that eſtate, we may comfort our ſelves, and be able to claime our part, portion and intereſt in theſe excellent promiſes.

Thus by Gods bleſſing we have paſſed over the particulars of Gods gratious promiſes to his Church, and all that ſhall come under the Church; all which ſhould incourage us to goe to God, and doe as the Church doth here, *take words to our ſelves*, and deſire God, *to take away all iniquity, and heale all our backeſlidings*, and that we may renounce all vaine confidence, as the Church doth here: who is taught to truſt horſes

SER. IX.

horſes no longer; *Aſſhur ſhall not ſave us.* And then let us (as was ſaid) cleave unto the bleſſed promiſes, that wee may improove them, and make them our own every day more and more. Therefore let us have in the eye of our ſoule the excellency of growth; or elſe we ſhall not value theſe promiſes. Let us conſider what an excellent condition it is to grow, flouriſh and be fruitfull, having a due eſteeme of all theſe promiſes before hand. Doe but conſider how excellent a Chriſtian is that groweth above others, what a majeſty he hath in his carriage? how undauntedly he walks in all oppoſitions whatſoever, as a *Lyon* in his courſes. How he overlookes Hell, Wrath, Death, Damnation and all. What a ſweet communion he enjoyeth with God in all the diſconſolations that the world puts upon him. He carrieth his Heaven in his heart, and a Paradice within him, which is planted with all graces, whereas another man carrieth his Hell about him.

The excellency of a growing Chriſtian Prov. 28. 1.

Wherefore let us take ſuch courſes to helpe our ſelves as the Church doth here: truſt in God and not in man, or in the arme of fleſh; and be incouraged from all which hath beene ſaid, to have a good conceit of God, to bee fruitfull and draw on others to goodneſſe, that God, his Saints and Angells may be delighted with the ſent of our graces, and our ſelves comforted; that we may rejoyce in our portion and lot that God hath dealt ſo gratiouſly to us, and glory more that he has made us members of Chriſt,

Chriſt, and heires of Heaven, then in any condition of this world. O the incomparable excellent ſtate of a Chriſtian, abov eall the glory of this world: who not onely groweth, but ſhall grow to heaven-wards ſtill; and as he hath begun to hate ſinne, ſhall hate it more and more: God hath undertaken it ſhall be ſo: *Ephraim* after all theſe ſweet promiſes and *dew* of *Grace*, ſhall ſay; *What have I any more to doe with Idols*, &c. The proſecution whereof muſt be referred untill the next time.

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The end of the ninth Sermon.

THE TENTH SERMON.

Hos. 14. 8.

Ephraim shall say, what have I any more to doe with Idols? I have heard him and observed him: I am like a greene firre tree, from me is thy fruit found.

WEE have heard at severall times heretofore, how God out of the largenesse of his goodnesse, goeth beyond those desires which hee putteth into his peoples hearts. They briefly intreat him to *Doe good* to them, and to deale gratiously

tiouſly with them. And he anſwereth them largely: that *He will be as the Dew to them*; that *they ſhall grow as the Lillie*, and *caſt foorth their rootes as Lebanon*, All ſet out by moſt excellent compariſons, helping grace by nature, our ſoules by our bodies, and our ſpirits by our ſenſes. As we have ſoules and bodies, ſo God applyeth himſelfe to both. *His Branches ſhall ſpread; his Beauty ſhall be as the Olive, and his ſmell as Lebanon.*

Then in the 7. Verſe, his gratious promiſe reacheth unto thoſe who dwell under the Church: *Thoſe that dwell under his ſhadow ſhall returne, they ſhall revive as the corne, and grow as the Vine*, &c. The new Church that ſhall come under the ſhadow of the old, ſhall flouriſh as the ancient did. *They that dwell under his ſhadow*, that is under *Ephraims* and *Iſraels ſhadow ſhall returne*, and be partakers of the ſame dew of grace.

Now this eigth verſe containeth a further gratious promiſe to *Ephraim* upon his repenting and former reſolutions: *Ephraim* ſaid, *Aſſhur ſhall not ſave us, we will not ride upon horſes: neither will we ſay any more to the worke of our hands ye are our gods.* Now what ſaith God here? (repeating the words of *Ephraim*) *Ephraim* (ſhall ſay) is not in the Originall, but onely ſet downe to expreſſe what the meaning is, whereas *Ephraim* ſaid, *What have I any more to doe with Idols? Ephraim* ſhall have this anſwer, *I have heard him, and obſerved him, I*

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am like a greene firre tree: from mee is thy fruit found.

As though the Lord had ſaid, let not *Ephraim* thinke that when he hath forſooke Idols, hee hath forſaken his comfort, (as though there were no comfort in walking according to the rule of my Word and Lawes.) Let him know that in ſteed of theſe poore and baſe comforts, either in groſſe Idolatry, or other more cunning Idolatries whatſoever which formerly tooke him up, that now he ſhall exchange them for more ſolid and ſubſtantiall comforts. For, *I have heard him, and obſerved him:* ſo that let him ſee what he looſeth in parting with baſe corruptions, worldly luſts, pleaſures and the like, hee ſhall finde it more abundantly ſupplied in a farre more excellent manner in mee, and in the fruits and effects of my love unto him; ſo as he ſhall finde that there is nothing loſt by entring ſtrictly into my ſervice. And whereas formerly hee walked in a vaine ſhadow, in relying on *Egypt*, *Aſhur*, *and the works of his owne hands:* now hee ſhall have a farre more excellent ſhadow, which no ſtorme, nor raine, nor injury of weather can pierce through: *I am like a greene firre-tree unto him.* Not ſuch a ſhadow as thoſe his Idols were, who could not keepe off the ſtorme of Gods wrath from him, nor ſuch a ſhadow as *Ionahs gourd* was, which flouriſhed for one day, and was nip't the next. No, I will be conſtant and permanent as my ſelfe, *I will be as the greene* Ionah. 4. 5, 6.

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firre tree; a conſtant ſhadow to keepe backe all annoyance whatſoever; not like the curſed noyſome ſhadow of Idols, under which *Ephraim* reſted before. But, *I will obſerve and regard him, and be like a greene firre tree unto him.* I will not onely be a ſhadow and ſhelter of defence unto him from injurie and moleſtation, that he may reſt quietly; but hee ſhall be alſo *fruitfull*: though the *firre tree* be not ſo fruitfull: yet *from mee is thy fruit found*, whatſoever he is in himſelfe; yet this ſhall not be matter of diſcouragement unto him: I am allſufficient, there is enough in mee to ſupply him with: *from mee is thy fruit found.* But to take them in order.

Ephraim ſhall ſay, what have I any more to doe with Idols, &c.

Some thinke the words come upon *Ephraims* obſerving and hearing of him: ſo as when God is ſeene in his moſt excellent majeſty and glory, and obſerved as he is juſt, mercifull and wonderfull terrible in himſelfe, that this manner of hearing and obſervation cauſeth fleſh and bloud ſo to ſtoope and reforme, as they yeeld themſelves, and reſigne up all unto God, ſeeing that miſerable condition they are in, and what an infinite diſtance there is betwixt their impurity, and Gods moſt excellent holineſſe. As we read of *Iſaiah* when he had ſeene God in his throne of majeſty; *Woe is mee* (ſaith he) *for I am undone, becauſe I am a man of uncleane lips, and I dwell in the midſt of a people of uncleane lips: for mine eyes have ſeene the King, the Lord of Hoſts.* Iſa. 6. 5.

And

And ſo of *Iob*, *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the eare, but now mine eye ſeeth thee, wherefore I abhorre my ſelfe, and repent in duſt and aſhes.* Which indeed is true in the generall, that a man then truly repenteth and turneth unto God, when he knoweth God and himſelfe to purpoſe; and never effectually untill then: for Chriſt who cannot lye, and is truth it ſelfe, calleth this kinde of knowledge eternall life. *This is life eternall, to know thee to be the onely very God, and whom thou haſt ſent Ieſus Chriſt.* Iob. 42. 5, 6. Iohn. 17. 3. But though this be a generall truth: yet we take it here rather for an incouragement unto *Ephraim*, as before, that nothing is loſt by cleaving unto Gods wayes, and forſaking of ſinne. Now whereas *Ephraim* (ſhall ſay) *what have I any more to doe with Idols:* In the words we may conſider.

1. The manner of expreſſion, with a great indignation of ſoule, *What have I any more to doe*, &c.

2. The matter ſo hated with indignation, is *Idolatry*, their former *Idols*. *Ephraim* (ſhall ſay) *What have I any more to doe with Idols.*

Ephraim wee ſee renounceth *Idolatry*, but in what manner is this done? with an high indignation of zeale and hatred: *What have I any more to doe with Idols:* Hee doth not ſay now that *Ephraim* hath left Idolatry, I will ſupply all theſe comforts that they had by Idols. But *Ephraim* loathes Idolatry, therefore he ſaith *What have I any more to doe with Idols?* It is

The true renouncing of ſin muſt bee with indignation.

a figurative Queſtion, implying a ſtrong deniall with a ſtrong indignation. *What have I any more to doe with Idols?* I have had too much to doe with them: I have now nothing to doe with *Idols*. It is a negation and deniall with as great averſation, and abhomination as can bee poſſibly expreſt: for in ſuch queſtions, the deniall is ſet forth more ſtrongly by a negation, and with a greater emphaſis, then by any affirmation is poſſible to expreſſe. So elegant is the Spirit of God in ſetting forth ſpirituall things in a heavenly and tranſcendent manner.

Ephraim (ſhall ſay) *what have I any more to doe with Idols*, &c.

Hence in that *Ephraim* ſhall ſay thus, and ſay it with ſuch vehemency of ſpirit and indignation, we may obſerve in generall.

Obſerv. *There is excellent uſe of the affections.*

God hath planted the affections in us to be as the winde, to carry the ſoule too and fro, forward or backeward: for affections are planted in the ſoule anſwerable to things aimed at by it. For, as in the nature of things, there be good and bad, delightfull and hatefull, hurting or pleaſing: ſo anſwerably God hath framed the ſoule to the nature of things. For good things, God hath planted affections in us to joyne, claſpe, imbrace them and welcome them, as Love, Joy, Delight, and ſuch like. And for evill things, he hath planted affections to avoid them, as indignation, hatred and the like. Indeed Religion is mainely in the affecti-

That the ſoule hath affections ſuitable to the things it aimeth at.

That Religion is eſpecially in the affections.

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ons, whereof there is excellent uſe, take away them, and take away all Religion whatſoever. A man, were it not for his affections, is like *Mare mortuum*, the dead ſea that never ſtirreth. Therefore it is but a doting idle conceit of theſe rigid men, that take away affections: much like the follie of them, who becauſe they have beene drunke with wine, doe therefore cut up all the vines. But the way were to moderate the exceſſe, not to cut up the vines. So for the affections, wee muſt not roote them up, or cut them downe, but order them aright. For what doth the firſt Commandent require? [*Thou ſhalt have no other gods but mee,*] But a right ordering of all the affections of the ſoule, *Ioy, delight, truſt* and *feare*, and the whole frame of them to be carried to God. For the inward worſhip of God is nothing elſe, but the excellent working of theſe affections ſutably to the Law, with the deteſtation of the contrary. It is not knowledge that makes a man a good man, but the affections: the Divell and wicked ſpirits know much; but they have no love, joy, or delight in them. Therefore we muſt value our ſelves and things, as we are in our will and affections: for ſo God valueth us, and we ſhould value others thereby. This well done would bring us a wondrous deale of comfort, and ſtop our too much and rigid judging and cenſuring of others.

Ephraim (ſhall ſay) *what have I any more to doe with Idols?*

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Now in particular we ſee here, that *Ephraim* not onely leaveth *Idols*, but there is planted in him a ſound indignation againſt them: whence we may learne,

Obſerv. *That it is not enough to leave ſinne; but we muſt loath ſinne alſo.*

A notable place to this purpoſe we have in the Prophecie of *Iſaiah*, what they ſhould doe after their converſion, in the caſe of hatred to Idolatry. *Ye ſhall defile alſo the covering of thy graven Images of ſilver, and the ornament of thy molten Images of gold; thou ſhalt caſt them away as a menſtruous cloth, thou ſhalt ſay unto it get thee hence.* There is a hatred and a ſtrong loathing indignttion againſt ſinne, when it is diſcovered in the pollution and vileneſſe thereof: which affection of hatred God hath planted to draw the ſoule away from any thing that is truely hurtfull to it. It is not enough to leave ſin for ſome by ends, as feare of puniſhment, ſhame and the like: but we muſt loath it alſo. The Prophet *David* when he profeſſeth his love to the law: how prooveth he it? *I hate and abhorre lying.* And ſo againe, *Doe not I hate them O Lord that hate thee? and am not I grieved with thoſe that riſe up againſt thee? I hate them with perfect hatred, I account them mine enemies.* Here is hatred and perfect hatred with abhomination.

Iſa. 30. 22.

Pſal. 119. 163.

Pſal. 139. 21.

Reaſon, 1. The Reaſon is, becauſe God is a Spirit, and lookes to the bent of our ſpirits, ſeeing what we love and what we hate: therfore the ſtrength

Iohn. 4. 24.

of

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of this conſideration draweth the ſoule to hate and love with God, as hee hates and loves: and as much as may be to hate ſinne as he doth.

And then againe, he requireth our heart eſpecially, *My ſonne give me thy heart.* Give me thy love in that which is good, and hate that which is ill. What ill we leave, we muſt hate firſt; and what good we doe, we muſt firſt love, or elſe we ſhall never doe either of them acceptably to purpoſe. What the heart doth not, is not done in Religion, if it hath no hand in the avoiding of ill, it is not avoided: if it have no hand in the doing of good, it is not done before God. Therefore in true converſion, there muſt be a loathing of ſinne. *Reaſon. 2.*

Thirdly, Becauſe in all true converſion there is a new nature put in us; now the New Creature, which partaketh of the Divine Nature whereby we reſemble God, it hath an Antipathy to the greateſt ill, which is ſinne, the cauſe of all other evils whatſoever, which maketh us oppoſite to God, defileth the ſoule, and hindereth our ſweet communion with him. A new Creature we know hath a new diſpoſition, and is oppoſite to the works of the fleſh, they are contrary to one another: ſo that we ſee it cleere, that we *muſt not onely leave, but loath ſinne.* *Reaſon. 3.*

But how may we know, diſcerne, and trie this true hatred of ſinne? *Queſt.*

Firſt, true hatred is univerſall, he who hates *Anſw.* *Our hatred of ſinne is 1. when it is univerſall.*

ill truely, hates it univerſally in the whole kinde. As we ſee in wicked men and divels who hate God and all goodneſſe: ſo on the contrary thoſe that are good, hate all ill whatſoever, whether it pleaſure, or diſpleaſure them, they ſtand not upon it, they hate the very nature of all ill. Thoſe whoſe obedience and affections are partiall, they hate ſome evills, but not others, which is not true hatred wrought by the Spirit of God, for that is univerſall to the whole kinde.

2. *Implacable.*

Then alſo, whereſoever true hatred is, it is unplacable, and unappeaſable, there's no true end of ſound hatred, but by the aboliſhing altogether of that thing it hates; as we ſee the hatred of Satan to the Church and people of God, is unappeaſable and unquenchable; nothing in the world can ſtay Satans hatred, nor the hatred of his inſtruments, who hate the remembrance of Gods people. Therefore the very name of *Calvin* and *Luther* muſt be put out of their bookes to ſatisfie their hatred. Not onely when they are dead, burne their bones, but aboliſh their memory if they can. So there is the like diſpoſition in Gods people to that which is ill. A godly diſpoſition it hateth ſinne even to the death, and is not quiet untill all ſinne be aboliſhed. Whereupon it is never quiet in this life, but deſires Heaven, not enduring patiently the leaſt reliques and rags of ſinne: deſiring that that which it ſo hateth, might have no being at all. Thoſe who mince

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and cull things, who are ſo gentle and tender towards their ſinnes and corruptions in themſelves and others: is this that hatred which is unappeaſable, and never reſts, till it ſee either a through Reformation or aboliſhing of what it ſo hateth. Wherin it is a more rooted affection then anger, for hatred is a rooted offenſive diſpleaſure againſt perſons and things; and ſo rooted as that nothing in the world can roote it out. Anger may be appeaſed, it is appeaſed in God, and it may and muſt bee in men. But hatred is implacable, aiming at the annihilation of the thing ſo hated.

3. *When we hate ſinne chiefly in our ſelves.*

Againe, where true hatred and indignation is, *there the neerer the ill is to us, the more we hate it*, &c. As we hate it in it ſelfe, ſo we hate it the more the neerer it is to us, as a *Toade* or any venimous thing, the neerer it is to us, we loath and abhorre it the more. So certainely, whoſoever hates and abhorreth ſin as ſin (as it is a hatefull thing to a renewed ſoule) ſo he hateth ſinne more in himſelfe then in others: becauſe it is neereſt in his owne boſome. Every man hates a ſnake more in his boſome then a farre off, becauſe it is more likely to doe him harme there. Therefore thoſe that flatter their owne corruptions, and are violent againſt others, as *Iudah* againſt *Thamar*, *ſhe ſhall be burned, bring her foorth and burne her*, when himſelfe had gotten her with childe. So many are ſevere in puniſhing of others, as if they were wondrous zealous: but what are they in their owne breaſt? Gen. 38. 24.

breaſt? doe they reforme ſinne in their owne hearts and lives? he that truely hates ſinne, hee hateth his own ſinnes more then others, becauſe it is neere him.

4. *When we hate ſinne moſt in our families, &c.*

And ſo (in proportion) he that hates ſin truely will hate it in his owne family, children and ſervants, more then in others abroad. It was a great fault in *David*, that he cockered up *Adoniah* and others in his owne houſe, whilſt he was more ſtrict abroad. Can men thinke to redreſſe and hate ſinne in the common-wealth, and yet ſuffer it in their families? true hatred is moſt converſant in its ſtrength neere hand. Thoſe who ſuffer deboyſtneſſe and prophaneneſſe in their families, and never checke it in their children and ſervants, they hate not ſinne, whatſoever countenance they may take upon them of reformation abroad, it commeth out of by-reſpects, and not out of true hatred.

5. *When wee hate the greateſt ſin in the greateſt meaſure.*

Againe he that hateth ſinne truely as ſinne, will hate the greateſt ſin in the greateſt meaſure; becauſe he hates it, as it is hatefull. Now in the nature of things, the greateſt ſin deſerveth the greateſt abhomination, and averſation from it. Therefore, he who truely hateth ſinne, he hates the greateſt ſinne moſt of all. Thoſe therefore that are very nice in leſſe matters, and looſe in greater things, It is but Hipocriſie: for hee who truely hates ſinne as ſinne, where the greateſt ſinne is, thither he directs the edge of his hatred, which is the ſtronglieſt carried againſt the ſtrongeſt ill. And ſuch a one will not

not reſpect perſons in evill; but whereſoever he findeth it; if he have a calling, there will be an anſwerable hatred of it. Therefore if one be a Miniſter of the Word of God, he will doe as good *Micaiah* did, and will not balke *Ahab* for his greatneſſe. And like good *Iohn Baptiſt*, hee will tell *Herod* of his faults, becauſe he hates ſinne as ſinne; therefore (where he hath a calling to it) he will hate it proportionably in the greateſt meaſure. Good *Ely* in this caſe, was too indulgent over his ſonnes: but we muſt love no man ſo neerely, as to love the ill in them.

1 King. 22.

1 Sam. 2.

6. *If we can endure Reproofs for ſinne.*

Againe a man may know that he truely hates ſinne, if he can endure admonition and reproofe for ſinne. Hee that hates a venemous plant which troubleth the ground, will not bee diſpleaſed if a man come and tell him that he hath ſuch a plant in his ground, and will helpe him to dig it up: ſurely he cannot bee diſpleaſed with the partie. So here, if a man doe truely hate ſinne, will he be angry with him that ſhall tell him that he is obnoxious to ſuch an evill which will hurt him dangerouſly and damne his ſoule if it be not helpt? ſurely no: therefore let men pretend what they will, thoſe who ſwell againſt private reproofe, they doe not hate ſinne as ſinne. Onely adde we this Caution: A Reproofe may be adminiſtred with ſuch indiſcretion, out of ſelfe-love, and with a high-hand, as that a man may diſlike the carnall manner of reprooving. But if it be done in

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in a good manner, he that hates reproofe, becauſe he loveth himſelfe and his ſinne (pretend what he will) he hates not ſinne.

7. *Such will not be flattered in their ſins.*

So if a man love to be flattered in his ſinne, it is a ſigne he hates not ſinne truely. For there is naturally a great deale of ſelfe-love in man, which makes him that he loves to be flattered in his ſinnes: whereupon he comes to be abuſed to his owne deſtruction, eſpecially great men. Now it is a ſigne of an ill ſtate of ſoule, to bee ſubject to be abuſed by flattery, and to hate inſtruction: (ſaith *Paul*) *Am I your enemy, becauſe I have told you the Truth.* Gal. 4. 16.

8. *If we hate to talke of, or mention it and ſhun occaſions.*

Againe, we may know what our hatred to ſinne is, by our willingneſſe or unwillingneſſe to talke of it, or mention it, or to venture upon the occaſions thereof. Where hatred is, there is outward averſation; we flie from what we hate, and ſhunne to frequent places where we may receive offence. Whatſoever hath an Antipathie to nature, that we hate and runne away from. Therefore thoſe that preſent themſelves to the occaſions of ſinne, upon no calling: (ſay what they will) they feed ſinne and live according to the fleſh: thoſe that hate a thing, will never come neere it if they can chooſe. Therefore, thoſe that preſent themſelves willingly to places infected, where there is nothing religious, but ſcorning of Religion, your common repreſentations of abhomination, pretend what they will, their intent is to ſtrengthen their owne corruption, againſt the

the good of their ſoules: this is the iſſue. Thoſe that hate ſin, will hate all that which may leade to it, the repreſentations of ſinne alſo. Can a man hate ſinne and ſee it acted? wickednesſe is learned, when one ſeeth it acted, as one of the Ancients ſaith well: therefore let us by theſe and the like tryals take notice what our hatred to ſinne is.

A limitation for expreſſing of our hatred to ſinne.

Onely this our zeale, hatred, and indignation to ſin muſt have a mitigation and be regulated, leaſt like an exorbitant river it exceed the bounds: therefore not to follow the Schoole niceties in the exactneſſe of differences, we will touch the marke a little, how this zeale and hatred to ſinne in reproofe (eſpecially) muſt be qualified: wherein we muſt conſider divers things.

1.
Wee muſt conſider our calling to reproove others.

Firſt, Our calling muſt be reſpected, for howſoever we muſt carry an univerſall hatred to ſin, thus farre, that we muſt not doe it. Yet in the diſcovery of hatred and diſlike to others, we muſt conſider what calling we have and how farre we goe.

2.
It muſt be with a due reſpect & keeping of diſtance to the party reproved.

And it muſt be done with a ſweet temper, keeping our diſtance, and reſerving the due reſpect unto thoſe in whom we ſhew our diſlike. As we ſee, *Nathan* when he came to tell *David* of his fault, how he doth it, what art he uſeth, It muſt ſo be done, as that it may appeare to be done out of pure zeale, that it is no wilde-fire, nor no heate of nature, but that it commeth meerely from the ſpirit, and in much love with mildneſſe

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mildnesse and pitie: in which case it carrieth a wondrous authority. The discoverie of hatred to the faults either in a Minister, or in a Megistrate, though they must be truely dealt with, and have their faults told them: yet there must be respect had to their place, by reason of the weakenesse of men. As it is with the body, great men have their Phisitians as well as meaner: onely their phisicke must be more costly, because (perhaps) of their tendernesse of their constitutions: but as for their bodyes, they must not be suffered to perrish, nor will not. So for their soules, they must have that which other men have to helpe them: but it must be done with reservation and respect, as *Paul* speaking to *Festus* the Governour, calleth him *most Noble Festus*, &c. Act.26.25. Pressing also goodnesse (in some sort) upon *King Agrippa: O King Agrippa, believest thou the Prophets, I know thou dost.* Act.26.27. So wee see how wee may examine whether our hatred to sinne be true or not.

Let every one therefore make Use of it in their calling; Those that are intrusted with Gods Message, let them know that Gods Ambassadors are to be faithfull in their Message; for they serve a greater Lord then is upon the Earth. And let them shew their true hatred of ill, and the danger of sinne whersoever they finde it. And for those that are Governours of others, let them not thinke that they hate sin in themselves, except they hate sin also in all that

that belong to them and reforme it. For we ſee here an evidence of converſion: when *Ephraim* was converted. *What have I any more to doe with Idols?* and 2 *Cor.* 7. 11. There is an excellent deſcription of the nature of Repentance by many parcels. The *Corinthians* had repented: how is this evidenced? O! *Behold* (ſaith he) *this ſelfe ſame thing, that ye ſorrowed after a godly ſort; what carefulneſſe it wrought in you? yea what cleering of your ſelves, yea what indignation? yea what feare? yea what vehement deſire? yea what zeale? yea what revenge?* what Revenge and Indignation againſt ſinne, a kind of extreamitie of hatred? a hatred quickned and kindled, the height of hatred. *What Indignation?* Inſinuating, that whereſoever there is the truth of converſion, there will be indignation againſt ſinne in our ſelves. As *David* confeſſeth of himſelfe having ſinned. *So fooliſh was I and ignorant, I was as a beaſt before thee.* When he ſuffered ſuch a thought to lodge in his breaſt, that it was better with the children of the world, then with the Church of God, he was troubled for it. But when he went into the Church of God, and ſaw the end of wicked men, then he ſaw his owne fooliſhneſſe in being ſo deceived, and ſpeakes againſt himſelfe with indignation. So whereſoever there is true converſion, there is hatred with indignation againſt our ſelves. As in that place before alleadged, they ſhall ſay unto their Idols, *get thee hence:* what have I any more to doe with you

2 Cor. 7. 11.

Pſal 73. 22.

Iſa 30. 22.

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you? which is a phraſe of ſpeech ſhewing a diſpoſition of hatred to the utmoſt extention. *Get you hence*; So Chriſt to the Divell: *Get thee behinde me Satan.* This is the right temper of a truely converted Chriſtian, expreſt by divers phraſes in Scripture; By a denyall of our luſts, by killing and crucifying, by pulling out the eye, and cutting of the right hand; which phraſes, doe they not imply a great ſtrength of hatred and indignation? when we muſt as it were pull out our owne eyes: that is our beloved ſins, which are as deare to us as our eyes, and as uſefull as our right hands unto us. Yet
Col. 3. 2. theſe muſt be cut off, mortified, crucified, and denyed. Therefore let us not deceive our ſelves: but let us judge of the truth of our converſion, by our true hatred to ſinne in our ſelves and others, and in all who are committed to our charge.

If this be ſo, what ſhall we judge of a cold luke-warme temper? It is the nature of cold to gather Heterogeniall bodies together. As we ſee in Ice there are ſtrawes, and ſtones and all Heterogeniall things incorporated, becauſe the cold congeales them together. But where there is fire, there is a ſeperating of the droſſe from the good mettall. So where the Spirit of God is, it is not ſo cold as to jumble ſin and ſin, this and that together: but it purgeth away that which is ill, and that which is good it makes better. For in what proportion the fire of Gods Spirit ſtirs up that which is good, in that proportion

portion there is a hatred of that which is ill. They are unparaleld affections. Thoſe that love God they hate evill. Thoſe that are alike to all things, doe ſhew that they have not this active true hatred againſt ſinne. No, *Ephraim* (ſhall ſay) *What have I any more to doe with Idols?*

Queſt.

But now how ſhall wee come to get this hatred againſt ſinne, and holy Revenge and Indignation againſt our ſelves for that which is amiſſe in us.

Anſw.

How we may come to hate our ſinnes.

Wee muſt get neare communion with God, and a cleare ſight of his excellency.

Exo. 32, 19.

First, we muſt every day labour to get a cleerer ſight of the excellency of that which is good, and a neerer communion with God by Prayer and Meditation: and then when we have beene with God, it will worke an abhomination of whatſoever is contrary unto him. Thus *Moſes*, when he had talked with God in the mountaine, at his returne ſeeing them dancing and ſacrificing to the Calfe of gold, what did *Moſes?* he brake the Tables aſunder. So it is with thoſe that have communion with God, who is light it ſelfe, and in whom is no darkeneſſe, who is Holineſſe and Puritie it ſelfe: thoſe who have effectually converſed with God in his Ordinances, Meditation, Prayer and the like; when they looke upon ſinne which is contrary to God, they looke upon it with a more perfect hatred. So *Eſay.6.* When God appeared to the Prophet, and touched his tongue with a coale from the Altar (ſaith he) *Woe is me for I am*

1 Iohn. 1. 5.

undone, becauſe I am a man of uncleane lips, &c. for mine eyes have ſeene the King the Lord of Hoſtes. Thus when once he had communion with God, he began to loath himſelfe. So if we would hate evill, let us labour more and more to be holy and to increaſe in that divine affection of love. For in what meaſure wee love that which is good, in that meaſure we hate the evill. As it is *Pſal.* 97. 10. *Yee that love the Lord, hate evill.* Inſinuating that all that love the Lord hate evill. All thoſe that are neere unto God, they hate all ſin: the more they grow into communion with God, the more they grow in the hatred of all that is contrary. Let us therfore never talk of love to God, and of Piety and ſuch like; for if there be any grace or communion with God, we hate all ſin in that meaſure as God hateth; he who hath no zeale to reforme that which God hateth, he hath no love at all.

2. *Wee muſt ſet before us what ſinne is in itſelfe.*

Againe, the way to ſtir us up to hate ſin in our ſelves and others, & out of that hatred to reforme it, is to ſet before us, what it is in it ſelfe: that it is the loathſomeſt thing in the world; worſe then the Divel himſelf: for it is ſin which makes him a Divell. That Corruption, Pride, Worldlines, and Profaneſſe which we cheriſh, is worſe then the Divell himſelf, becauſe this made him a Divell. Let us make ſin therfore as loathſome as we can, and then we ſhall hate it. And let us preſent it to our ſoules, as the moſt dangerous thing of all, the ill of ills, which bringeth all other evills upon us. This may appeare more

more ugly in our ſight, in that the foulneſſe thereof could not bee expiated, but by the death of the Sonne of God. And conſider, what great torments he hath prepared for that which we ſo cheriſh: this proud ſinfull and carnall diſpoſition of ours ſo oppoſite to all goodneſſe; God hath appointed to puniſh it with eternall ſeperation from his preſence. It maketh God hate his owne creatures: *Goe ye curſed into everlaſting fire, prepared for the Divell and his Angels.* Mat. 25. 41.

3. *We muſt conſider the dangerous condition of unrepenting ſinners.*

And to ſtir us up to reforme ſin in all that belong unto us, we muſt conſider the dangerous condition that they live and die in, in whom this not reformed, Eternall torments and ſeperation is from God. Theſe things may help to work in our hearts a hatred of ſin: and from this hatred, a Reformation of it, with zeale and indignation. Therefore let us labour more and more for this temper of ſoule, that we may be like God and carry the Characters of the Children of God in us. There is no affection will diſtinguiſh us from Hypocrits more then hatred, which commeth of love, which is the firſt borne and breeding affection of all others. For why doe we hate any thing, but becauſe it is oppoſite to that we love? why doe we hate ill, but becauſe it is oppoſite to God and to Chriſt whom we love? amongſt others, take we along this conſideration with us, that it is the Speare which wounded our bleſſed Saviour, and that it is that he hates moſt, which we

love moſt. Conſider the Holineſſe of God that he would puniſh it in his owne ſonne, ere it ſhould not be puniſhed.

4. *Wee muſt conſider it is the bane of all our comforts.*

And conſider that it is the bane of all our comfort, this which we ſo cheriſh, and that it imbitters all things to us. We cannot rejoyce (no not in the good bleſſings of God) whilſt we are guilty of ſinne: neither can we pray comfortably, whilſt our hearts regard it. In this caſe that which ſhould rejoyce the heart, communion with God, is terrible to us. What have I to doe to take his name in my mouth, when I embrace ſuch ſinnes. The day of judgement is terrible alſo, for how can a man thinke comfortably thereof, if therewith hee expect a heavie doome for his ſinnes he liveth in? So we may ſay of the day of death, none of theſe can be thought upon without terror, when therewithall it commeth to ones minde the cutting off from their ſinnes, and the *terror of the Lord* againſt all ſinne whatſoever. It ſhould be the joy of our hearts to thinke of theſe happy times: therefore there muſt needs be a great deale of ſinne and Atheiſme in our hearts, when we cannot thinke comfortably of them. For either wee believe not theſe things, and ſo are plaine Atheiſts: or elſe, if we beleeve them, wee are exceeding fooliſh to looſe future joyes for the poore *pleaſures of ſinne for a ſeaſon.*

Pſal. 66. 18.

Pſal. 50. 16.

2 Cor. 5. 11.

5. *We muſt grow in the love of grace and goodneſſe.*

Let us labour to grow in grace more & more, for the more we grow in the love of God and of good

of good things, the more we ſhall hate ſin: for whatſoever may be ſaid for the growth of love & cheriſhing of it to good things, the ſame may be ſaid for the hatred of ill in a contrary ſenſe.

The laſt helpe ſhall be, to place and drive our affections a contrary way, to tranſlate and place them on a contrary object, when they are ſtirred up to evill attempts. As when *Hatred* is ſtirred up, direct it to its proper object, ſinne: when *Love* is irregular; thinke with our ſelves, that God hath not planted this affection for this object: but to carry me another way: I muſt love God above all, and all that hee loveth for his ſake. Hath God put Love and Hatred into my heart to hate my brother whom I ſhould love, and to love the Divell, and hate God? O no! I ſhould love God above all and my brother as my ſelfe; and hate the Divell and all his workes, whom I have renounced in my Baptiſme; therefore in diſtempers of the affections, make a diverſion, and turne them the right way. As Phyſitians uſe to doe, when the diſtempered blood runs dangerouſly one way, If they cannot ſtop that, they open a veine to drive the courſe of the blood another way. So it is Chriſtian pollitie, when the affections run dangerouſly one way, then to reflect thus upon our ſelves. I but is this the end why God hath placed this affection in me, Certainely no, he hath planted this affection in me for another purpoſe. Therefore, I will hate that which I ſhould hate, ſinne

6. *Change the object to its right oppoſite.*

in generall: and my owne ſinne moſt of all, which makes me hate my brother. This ſhould be our daily taske and ſtudy, to take off the affections where they ſhould not be placed, and to fix them where they ſhould be placed: and there to let them goe amaine, the faſter the better; reſtraining them where they ſhould not runne out.

Thus we ought to temper our ſelves, and to worke in our ſelves as much as may be a ſound hatred to all ſinne, not onely of the ſecond Table, but of the firſt alſo. The Church here ſaith, *What have I any more to doe with Idols?* Now I hate all vaine inventions. And thinke not with *Gallio* that this belongeth not to us, if we be Magiſtrates and called to it, to ſtand for the cauſe of the Church and true Religion.

What have I any more to doe with Idols?

The laſt thing to be obſerved from *Ephraims manner* of expreſſing his indignation is,

Obſerv. *That where Love is not well contracted and begunne, it will not hold to the end, but will end in eternall hatred.*

That all wicked leagues muſt end in everlaſting hatred Gen. 3. 15.

The *Serpent* and *Hevah* had ſome poore acquaintance together (as the iſſue proved.) What did it end in? *The ſeed of the woeman ſhall breake the Serpents head.* This aſſociation and acquaintance ended in everlaſting warre and breach. So all covenants leagues and aſſociations with thoſe wee ſhould not joyne with, can never ſoder handſomely together but will end in everlaſting hatred. What a ſtrict league was in former

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former times betwixt *Ephraim* and *Idols*? But when *Ephraims* eyes are opened to ſee his *Idols* Divels, he deteſts and loaths all abhominations; and is of another minde; *What have I any more to doe with Idols?* he abhominates them, as the word importeth.

That naughty aſſociation and leagues cauſes a miſerable rent in the affections.

Let us therefore beware with whom wee joyne in intimate league. For what makes miſerable ſo much, as the renting of the affections from that they were ſtrongly placed on; when love is rent from the thing beloved. If we place our affections (for ſome bie reſpects) upon wicked perſons, this will cauſe ſo much the more torment and indignation againſt our ſelves, that we were ſo fooliſh to ſuffer our affections to enter ſo deepely where they ſhould not. Thoſe that glory in their league with Antichriſt, and wonder at the Beaſt, thinking him a Demy-God: will this be alway ſo? O no, when God opens the eyes of any of his people, they ſhall hate them for ever. So wicked perſons that now are led on to this and that wicked courſe, ſhall this be alwayes ſo? Woe to thee if it be: but the time may come that thou ſhalt ſay, *What have I any more to doe with Idols*, or with ſuch an ones acquaintaince? I cannot indure to looke on him, hee tainted mee, and miſled mee, and tempted mee: now we muſt be two, parte we muſt, and I would we had never met together. Therefore before we place our affections on any, conſider who they be; whether we be likely to live with them for ever or not?

Rev. 17. 12, 16.

A Conſideration in choice of company.

not? whether there be any evidence of grace in them. If not, let them be two to us; for whatſoever vanity is in the things or Perſons we love, if we belong to God we muſt be ſeparate from them, unleſſe we will be damned. Therefore we muſt be wiſe to prevent the danger betimes. *Ephraim* might have knowne before the danger of Idolatry had he been wiſe, and prudent; But it is well he knowes it now at length, which cauſeth him ſo to abhominate Idols: *What have I any more to doe with Idols?* This much is ſpoken becauſe of the luke-warmenes and cold temper, neutrality and halting of a great many in the world: having ſo many ſinnefull combinations, and aſſociations one with another, as if theſe things were not materiall.

That a reflection of what wee are & hope for is a meanes to preſerve a right temper:

Now let men conſider what a diſpoſition this is, and how it ſtands with that diſpoſition which muſt be in thoſe that are members of Chriſt, and looke for Heaven. Let a Chriſtian alwayes remember what he is, and what he hopes for, and this will put him in a right temper. 1. What he is, a King, and an heire of Heaven, *&c.* After which he ſhould reaſon with good *Nchemiah*, *Shall ſuch a man as I flie?* ſhall ſuch a man as I doe this? I am redeemed from my ſinnes and advanced to be a King, to rule over my luſts, to be an heire of Heaven and eternall happineſſe in the world to come, to raigne with Chriſt, and ſhall I doe thus and thus? Doth this ſtand with my new temper,

Nchem. xii.

this

this ſinne, this filthineſſe, this baſe action, and thoughts, that I am tempted to and incumbered with. Shall ſuch a man as I follow theſe baſe actions, wayes and companions? conſider we this well, and then it will breed *Ephraims* Reſolution, *What have I any more to doe with this baſe luſt?* what hath it to doe with me? or I with it? Is this and this action befitting a King and an heire of Heaven, and a new creature? and if a man be in authority, then let him conſider what *Mordecai* ſaid to *Heſter*; *What if thou be called to the Kingdome for ſuch a purpoſe.* What if thou be called to this place or dignity for this purpoſe? to reforme ſuch and ſuch abuſes. Thinke with thy ſelfe, not onely in particular what thou art? but in thy place, what if thou be called to reforme ſuch abuſes? ſuch unſound doctrines? to ſtand for God and for the truth. This will breed this reſolute indignation of *Ephraim* in us; *What have I any more now to doe with Idols?* All which is for the manner of *Ephraims indignation*: A ſtrong negation of an abhominated thing: *what have I any more to doe*, &c. The next which is the *Subſtance* and *Matter* abhominated [*Idolatry*] muſt be reſerved for ſome other time.

Heſt. 4. 14.

* * *

The end of the tenth Sermon.

THE ELEVENTH SERMON.

Hos. 14. 9.

Ephraim shall say, what have I any more to doe with Idols? I have heard him and observed him: I am like a greene firre tree, from me is thy fruit found.

WEE have heard at severall times heretofore, how graciously God deales with his people, alluring them by many free and gratious promises to his service, the particulars whereof, we heard heretofore at large. This 9. Verse. hath

hath reference unto that which went before *Ver.* 3. There *Ephraim* renounceth his former Idols. *Aſhur ſhall not ſave us*, &c. and here *Ephraim ſhall ſay, what have I any more to doe with Idols?* unto which the anſwer is, *I have heard him, and obſerved him; I am like a greene firre-tree unto him: from me is thy fruit found.* Now in that *Ephraim ſhall ſay, what have I any more to doe with Idols?* This in ſumme is onely the firſt part of the third Verſe repeated in another manner: that *Ephraim* ſhall and will goe on in abhominating Idoles, be conſtant in his former reſolution. Therefore in that *Ephraim* ſhall by the Spirit of grace, goe on in renouncing all falſe confidence, God ſheweth here that *Ephraim* ſhall looſe nothing by it (for he intends here the continuance of time) *I have heard him*, and J doe heare him, and I will heare him and reſpect him: and be like a ſhadie greene firre-tree to ſhade him, cauſing him alſo to be aboundant in fruit, *From me is thy fruit found.*

Ephraim ſhall ſay what have I any more to doe with Idols: here we conſidered *the manner of expreßion*, and then the *Matter* it ſelfe.

Ephraim ſhall ſay, what have I any more to doe with Idols?

To come therefore to the *Matter* it ſelfe ſpecified (*Idolatry*) againſt which *Ephraims* indignation is directed:

What have I to doe with Idols?

In handling whereof we muſt take in all theſe foure

foure together, that is

1. *Falſe Doctrine*, which is the foundation of *Idolatry*.

2. *Idols themſelves*: or

3. *Idolatry*, which they tend to (for hee which hates *Idols*, hates them, becauſe he hates Idolatry) or

4. *Idolaters*, as if he had ſaid,

What have I any more to doe with *Idolatrous Doctrines*, opinions or conceits: or with *Idoles* framed according to theſe conceits: or with *Idolatrie or Idolaters?* for theſe goe together, no man worſhips *Idols*, but becauſe he is poiſoned in his conceits: and *Idols* are forbidden, becauſe *Idolatry* is dangerous; and communion with *Idolaters* is forbidden, becauſe of *Idolatry*. So that the *Doctrine*, *Idols*, *Idolatry*, and *Communion with them*, all theſe are objects of *Ephraims* abhomination and indignation.

Ephraim (ſhall ſay) *what have I any more to doe with Idols?*

It were to miſpend pretious time (appointed for better uſes) to tell you of the abhominable diſtinctions of the Papiſts of *Latria* and *Dulia*, or to inſiſt upon a diſcourſe of Heatheniſh Idolatrie: Truthes, but not ſo profitable for us to ſpend time in. Therefore we will rather come to ſhew the Reaſons, why *Ephraim* ſo abhorreth Idolatry, Idols, and conceits of all.

I. *Reaſons of Ephraims hatred unto Idols.*

To begin in the firſt place with Idols; when *Ephraim* is truely converted, he hates them, becauſe Idols are abhominable to God, unto whom

I. *Becauſe they are abhominable unto God.*

whom *Ephraim* is now converted. *Ephraim* hates *Idols*, for *Idolatry* is ſpirituall Adulterie, Religion is as it were a conjugal act of marriage, ſo that a breach in religious worſhip, is a breach of ſpirituall marriage. Now the worſhipping of Idols being a breach of the conjugall act of marriage betwixt God and the ſoule, ſpirituall Adulterie, it muſt needs be abhominable. For adulterie is an abhominable filthie thing; much more ſpirituall Adulterie: therefore (ſaith *Ephraim*) *What have I now any more to doe with Idols?*

2. *Becauſe Idolatry frames baſe conceits of God*

And then againe, Idolatry frameth baſe conceits of God: whereas on the contrary wee ſhould elevate and raiſe up our hearts unto him, Idolatry pulls him downe and conformes him to our baſe conceits. Were it not a wrong to man, to make him like a Swine, or an Ape or ſome ſuch ridiculous creature? who in this caſe would thinke himſelfe well uſed? there is not ſuch diſproportion betwixt any creature and man, as there is betwixt the great God of Heaven and Earth and the beſt creature that can be made to reſemble him. Therefore it is an abhominable abuſe and diſhonour to the great Majeſty of God to berepreſented any kinde of way.

3. *Becauſe they are oppoſite to God.*

Againe, Conſider the oppoſition betweene any repreſentation of God, and God: they are corruptible things, God is incorruptible; they are viſible, God is inviſible: they are vaine and nothing; God a being of himſelfe, who

who giveth being unto all things. God is the living God, and the cauſe of all life. To be briefe, the Scripture to ſhew Gods hatred of them, calleth them dung-hill gods, and (*Abell*) as it is in this booke, *vanitie, nothing*, a name to alienate the affections from them.

Yea further, becauſe God is a Jealous God, and will not give his Glory to another. *Ephraim* therefore as ſoone as hee commeth to know God, hee hateth Idols, becauſe hee knows God being a Jealous God could not endure them.

4. Exo. 34 *Becauſe God is a Jealous God.* Iſa. 42. 8.

Now Idolatry is committed, when either we ſet up falſe gods in place of the true God: or when we worſhip the true God in a falſe manner.

How Idolatry is committed.

But now another Queſtion may be mooved, whether the Papiſts be Idolaters or not? for we live amongſt many of them; therefore we cannot be to warie of them.

Queſt.

The Anſwer is affirmative; they are Idolaters, and worſe in ſome ſort then the Heathen Idolaters were. Onely change the names of the Popiſh Saints which they in *Popery* worſhip, and the names that the Heathen worſhip, and they will be all one. Now names be no Realities.

Anſw.

Papiſts proved to be Idolaters.

How may this be cleared?

First, they give the honour due to God to others, which is Idolatry, the religious worſhip only due unto God they give unto other things. Chriſt when he ſaid, *him onely ſhalt thou ſerve*: excepted

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excepted the leaſt divine worſhip from the creature. The Divell we know would have had him fall downe before him: but Chriſts anſwer is, *Him onely ſhalt thou ſerve*; that is him onely ſhalt thou religiouſly proſtrate thy ſelfe unto; ſo that religious worſhip is proper to God onely. Now this they give to Saints, for they pray to them, which is a religious worſhip.

Object. But they object, that they pray not directly to them: but to them as Mediators, that they may pray to Chriſt for them.

Anſw. 1. Firſt they raiſe them above their degree to make them mediators, and ſo dethrone Chriſt of his office of Mediator, at leaſt joyne copartners with him.

2. But this is not all, they pray directly to Saints, to helpe them againſt ſeverall ills (as they have ſeverall Saints, for ſeverall evills) whatſoever they ſay who are not aſhamed of lying to further their deſignes, yet their books and writings doe teſtifie the contrary.

3. Then againe they vow to Saints, as in the forme of their vowes is ſeene: *I vow to the Virgin Mary*, &c. Now a vow is a religious act. They vow to Saints, and burne incenſe unto them, erect Temples, and ſet apart dayes for their worſhip, and ſo breake all the foure Commandements of the firſt Table. In a good faſhion it is not unfit to remember them, that their memoriall may be kept: but wee are not to worſhip them.

And

And beſides Saints, they have other falſe gods: for their head of the Church is an abhominable Idoll, unto whom they aſcribe that which is proper unto Chriſt, to be the head of the Church, which hath no influence from him, but all from Chriſt the ſpirituall head thereof. Therefore the Apoſtle complaineth of ſuch: *Who hold not the head*, &c. Thoſe of the Romiſh Church, *hold not the head*, hold not Chriſt, becauſe they attribute that to Saints and men, which is proper to Chriſt onely. They make the Pope the judge of all controverſies, who muſt give authority to the word, and determine Scripture to be Scripture, what a ſhamefull thing is this to make him judge of the Scriptures which muſt judge him at the laſt day? a pitifull thing it is, to ſee *a man of ſinne* goe about to judge the righteous law of God, and to determine of that which muſt ere long determine him unto eternall torments, without particular repentance. Yet being ſpiritually drunke, this folly they are given too, that they will be judge of that which muſt be judge of them. Many wayes they make him an Idol, aſcribing that to him which is proper to Chriſt. Col. 2. 19.

So likewiſe, they make their Sacraments to be Idols; for they aſcribe to the water in Baptiſme power of conferring grace. Now grace is Gods Creature onely, for all the Creatures in Heaven and Earth cannot conferre the leaſt dram of grace; it is a thing of Gods 5. 1. *Baptiſme.*

making. Now to raiſe an element to conferre grace, and then to truſt in it *ex opere operato*, for the conferring of it, is to make an *Idoll* of it. And for the Bread; none of all the *Heathens* ever had ſuch an abhominable Idoll as the Maſſe, a breaden God: for they worſhipped living creatures, and there is not the worſt living creature, but it is better then a peece of bread; and yet they worſhip that, for (by their owne confeſſion) if the intention of the Prieſt be not to the action, there is nothing but bread. How may the minds then of men be tormented, when they may or ſhall think, perhaps the Prieſt hath no ſuch intention? and ſo are in danger of Idolatry. For ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Their ſorrowes ſhall be multiplied that haſten after another god*, &c. So certainely the ſorrowes, and ſcruples of thoſe that are Idolaters ſhall bee multiplied, they cannot but be much tormented in ſoule ſometimes. *Coſter* himſelfe a forward Jeſuite acknowledgeth, *That if (upon the words of Conſecration) the Bread be not turned and Tranſubſtantiated into the body of Chriſt, we are the moſt abhominable Idolaters of the world.* But we make the *Minor* and *Aſſumption* (long ſince prooved by the late worthies of our Church) but there is no ſuch tranſubſtantiating of the Bread into the Body of Chriſt: therefore by their own confeſſ they are the moſt abhominable Idolaters of the world, worſe then the Heathen.

2. *The Bread in the Lords Supper.*

Pſal. 16. 4.

B. Iewell. D. Raineolds. D. Fulke D. Whitaker. D. Willet. Perkins, &c.

And in their equalizing traditions (which

are

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are but the inventions of mans braine) with the Scriptures: they commit Idolatry, in that they make their very Church an Idoll. But what should we speake of their Church, when they have the Pope who is their Church vertually: for what is said of the one may be said of the other. When they come to the issue, the Church is nothing but the Pope; whatsoever their Church or counsels say, hee is the whole Church. Many wayes they are grosse Idolaters, especially the common-people; for though they say they give not *Latria*, worship to the Image, but *Dulia*, service. But can the common-people distinguish, who give worship to all alike? to say we worship not the Image, but God before the Image, was the Heathens excuse, as we may see in *Arnobius*. Can the common-people distinguish? no, for they are ignorant Images themselves, in this they are worse then the heathens, because they have more light, and still the more light, the more sinne. For they have beene foretold, that the whoore of Rome should be the mother of all fornication, the Spirituall *Babylon*, *Sodome*, and *Ægypt*, in regard of Idolatry, the mother of all these abhominations. Now for them who have beene forewarned hereof, and in so much light still to continue Idolaters, and persist in false worship, is to be worse then the Heathens, who had not the like light and warning. Reve. 17. 5.

But what is the reason that they are so impudent and audacious? *Quest.*

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Anſw. 1. Firſt (to anſwer with the Scriptures) they are drunke with the whores cup, and we know a drunken man dares doe any thing. Rev. 17. 2.

Anſw. 2. And then againe, (as the Pſalmiſt ſpeakes) becauſe thoſe who worſhip Idols become blockiſh and ſtupid like unto them, for an Idoll is a blockiſh dead thing. So Idolaters are ſtupid dead things in a ſort, who are ſeldome converted; partly becauſe they are drunke, and partly becauſe they are ſtupid, like the Idols they worſhip. Pſal. 115. 8.

Vſe. 1 If this be ſo, as it is too true to the eye of the whole world, then how ought we to bleſſe God, who hath brought us out of this palpable *Ægyptian* darkeneſſe, out of ſpirituall *Sodome*, as *Lot* was out of that *Sodome*: O we cannot be thankefull enough, nor ought we to deſire to returne to *Sodome* againe, or unto *Ægypt*. Where then is place left for neutrality? thoſe neuters that will be of neither Religion? Is ſuch a diſpoſition from the Spirit of God, which maketh *Ephraim* ſay here, *what have I any more to doe with Idols?* *Ephraim* would not be a neuter, therefore what ſhall we ſay unto them that preſent themſelves to *Maſſes* in their travells eſpecially; is this to ſay with *Ephraim*: *what have I any more to doe with Idols?* we muſt beleeve with the heart, and confeſſe with the mouth to ſalvation: if a man might eſcape with having his heart to Godwards and his body proſtrate, where were confeſſion? In *Elyas* time, God told him, that Gen. 19. Rom. 10. 9.

there

there were left ſeven thouſand in *Iſrael*, who had not bowed the knee to *Baal*, that is who made no bodily proſtration. Therefore as the Papiſts do not joyne with us, ſo neither ought we with them, if we hold the contrary Religion falſe: in this caſe we ſhould not preſent our ſelves with them in any ſervice. 1 King. 19. 18.

Againe, if this be true, what doe we thinke of reconcilers of Religion? a thing impoſſible, as the Apoſtle ſheweth, *For what communion hath God with Belial? Chriſt with Anti-chriſt? what communion?* The Queſtion is a ſtrong Negation, as that of *Ephraim* here: *What have I now any more to doe with Idols?* *Vſe.* 2. 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15

But ſome may ſay we differ from them onely in circumſtance. *Object.*

We may aske any man who hath braines in his head, whether Idolatry bee a circumſtance or not? it being cleere that they are as great Idolaters as the Heathens in many inſtances. If any affirme that Idolatry is a circumſtance, there is no diſputing with ſuch a one. That which is the ſin which makes God abhorre and deſert his own people, is that a circumſtance? is that a circumſtance which is the chiefe ſin againſt the firſt Table? Granting that they are Idolaters, that the *Pope* is *Anti-chriſt*, & *Rome* to be *Babylon*, and *Babylon* to be the *mother of al fornication*. This muſt needs follow that ther can be no reconciling of theſe two Religions: we may come neare them, and become Papiſts, but they will never come neere us to be good Chriſtians. *Anſw.*

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Vſe. 3.
1 Iohn. 5.

Againe, if this be ſo that Popery be Idolatry, and that we muſt beware of all Idolatry, let us take heed therefore that we have nothing to doe with them more then we muſt needs. Converſe with them in our callings we may, becauſe (as an ancient father ſaith) we be compoſſeſſors of the world, and not of Religion: we muſt goe out of the world if we will not have to doe with them ſometimes in the places where we live, but amity is very dangerous with ſuch; the Scripture runnes much upon it, ſhould we love them whom God hates. It was *Eves* fault, that without a calling ſhe ventured to talke with the Serpent, wee ſhould therefore ſhunne converſing and parly with them as much as may be. As there were railes ſet about mount *Synai*, to keepe of the people from touching the Mountaine; ſo God hath ſet hedges about the ſecond Commandement, to keepe us off from offending in it: as it was uſuall with God in this kinde. As when he would keepe them farre from *murder*, he forbad them to kill the damme with the young, and not to ſeeth a kid in his mothers milke, onely to reſtraine them from murder that abhominable ſin; ſuch precepts the Jewes call *the hedges of the Commandements*. So for *Idolatry*, the Scripture would have us *hate the garment ſpotted with the fleſh, to defile the Coverings of the Images; to account them as a menſtruous cloath*, &c. and *to have nothing to doe with the unfruitfull workes of darkeneſſe*. To hate all

Deut. 22, 6: Exo. 23. 19.

Iud. ver 23. Iſa. 30. 22. Eph. 5. 11.

monuments

monuments of Idolatry. As *Auguſtine* ſaith of monuments; *any monument mooves and ſtirs up the minde.* So any thing that may moove or ſtirre us to Idolatry, wee ſhould abhorre and keepe a farre off from it.

And therefore the Commandements are ſet downe in the higheſt pitch of the ſinne, to ſhew that we ſhould avoid all the degrees under that which leads to ſo great a breach, and that wee ſhould hate all thoſe ſteps and leadings to the ſinne it ſelfe. We ſhould therefore beware of Popiſh writers, and doe with them as was done with the Magicke bookes in the *Acts*; burne them all, leaſt they corrupt our ſelves and others. Learne we this of the Papiſts, who hate our Bookes, burne them, or locke them up ſafe: yea hate the very Names of *Luther* and *Calvin*, much more their Bookes. Act. 19. 19.

In this caſe it is with the ſoule of man, as with water that reliſheth of that ſoyle through which it runnes: if it run through a hot ſoyle, as baths through a ſulphury ſoyle, it taſts of that. So the ſpirit of a man taſts of thoſe authors hee runnes through. Therefore ſuch who converſe much in Popiſh writings (unleſſe Miniſters who have a calling that way to confute them) are in danger to be inſnared by them. *That a mans ſpirit taſts of the Authors he is moſt converſant in.*

And then againe if we muſt hate all Idolatry, wee muſt take heed of occaſions. Not like ſome looſer Chriſtians, which make no matter of crucifixes: how doth the Spirit of *Ephraim* *Vſe.4.*

here agree with such? a crucifix is but a teacher of lies, representing onely the outside and that falsly: for there is no expression in Scripture what kind of man Christ was. And if there were, yet the Apostle sheweth, *That wee must now no more know him any more after the flesh*: not as such a man, as tall, and faire, &c. But know him as the Mediator, as King of Heaven and Earth, avoiding all lewd base conceits of him: people in this kinde are too bolde, and runne too neere Popery. A Father saith well, *No man is safe that is neere to danger*. Wee are commanded to flie from Idolatry, we must not come neere the pits brinke, least we fall in; runne and flie from it as from a Serpent, dally not with the occasions.

2 Cor. 5. 16.

1 Cor. 10. 14.

The more close Idolatries of many Christians.

But to leave this grosse Idolatry, to speake of something which more neerely concerneth us, and which wee are prone to: though we hate these grosse Idolatries, yet there be some wee are more neerely addicted to: as,

I.

To have false conceptions of God.

First of all, there is a proneness in us in our worship, to conceive false conceptions and *Ideas* of God, and so in place of worshiping God, wee worship an Idoll of our owne braine.

Quest. It may be said, How shall wee conceive of God when we worship him?

Answ. 1. *Wee must not conceive of God as of a finite essence.*

First of all Negatively, doe not dishonour God in imagining any character of an infinite incomprehensible God, but conceive of him, as an infinite essence.

And

And then conceive not abſolutely of God, but of God diſtinguiſhed in three Perſons. The Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghoſt, or elſe wee conceive an Idoll. For there are three Perſons in one common nature, and in our Prayers, we muſt not conceive the Nature without the Perſons.

2. *We muſt conceive of God, diſtinguiſhed in 3 Perſons.*

In the third place, we muſt not in our Prayers conceive of God without Chriſt the Mediator. For even as God was onely to be knowne and ſpoken to towards the Tabernacle: ſo Chriſt is the Tabernacle now where God manifeſts his gratious preſence, and will be worſhipped in him the Mediator. For God conſidered out of Chriſt is a conſuming fire: without Chriſt no converſe with God. Let us therefore take Chriſt along with us, when we goe to God, goe to him by God in our Nature, our *Immanuell*, and ſo we ſhall conceive of God aright, and not worſhip an Idoll of our owne braine.

3. *Wee muſt not conceive of God without Chriſt.*

Againe there is another thing which is a common abuſe among Chriſtians, wherein they come neere to Idolatry, when they transforme God to be like themſelves in their affections, as it is the property of all unregenerate men to doe ſo. Idolatry is ſo naturall it cannot but transforme God to be like it ſelfe, as for inſtance. A man that is not a gratious man, in the pride of his ſinnefull courſe, thinks that God is like unto him: *Thou thoughteſt that I was like unto thy ſelfe: therefore I will come againſt thee*, &c.

4. *It is Idolatry to transforme God like to us in affections.*

Pſal. 50. 21.

thee, &c. As oppreſſors and ſuch who grow great by ill courſes, they juſtifie this much: would God let me alone if he did not approove of my courſes? ſo they make God like themſelves. And ſo the good-fellowes of the world, they make God to allow all their diſſoluteneſſe, becauſe he lets them alone. So thoſe that are fierce and cruell by nature, who dellght in cruelty, vexation and blood, they transforme God as though he delighted in ſuch things, and make him a God of blood. So others transforme God to be all mercy: this is to make God an Idoll, and as ill as if they transformed him into this and that creature, worſe then the Heathens, in regard of their light under the Goſpell, yet this is the diſpoſition of many Chriſtians now a dayes.

Queſt. What was the reaſon why the Heathens worſhipped *Bacchus* and *Venus*, ſuch abhominable gods?

Anſw. They to countenance their luſts and drunkenneſſe deifie them; an abhominable ſinne of the Heathen, for which God gave them up to other ſinnes. Doth not our ſinne come neere theirs, when we make God to countenance our ſinne, and cite Scripture for it, as if God did countenance ſinne in his word, this is to transforme God into our owne abhominable conceits. Thoſe therefore who bleſſe themſelves in any ſinfull courſe, they are guilty of Idolatry in the worſt kinde that may be: for it is as ill to transforme God to allow of ſuch courſes,

as

as to transforme Christ to die for such who goe on in their sinnes without remorse, or to transforme him into the likenesse of such and such vile creatures.

3. *It is Idolatry to set somewhat up above God in our soules.*

Further, there is another sort of Idolatry Christians are subject unto, to set up somewhat in their hearts higher then God, there is no man without grace but he doth so untill his conversion. Nay, when a man is converted, he is prone to this, to Idolize and set up something above that which should bee in the heart. Hereupon *Paul* calleth *Covetousnesse Idolatry*: because a covetous man placeth those affections upon his owne wealth, which should dwell in God: for *he saith to the wedge of gold, thou art my confidence*; thinking his wealth shall beare him out in any ill cause whatsoever. And then againe, that time which hee should spend in thinking of God and of a better life, he burieth those thoughts in his mucke and wealth, toyling and moyling in the world, when he should serve God. Thus the covetous man is an Idolater.

Col. 3. 5.

Iob. 31. 24.

4. *Such commit Idolatry who have mens persons too much in admiration.*

And there are some guilty of Idolatry likewise in an other kind, such as have mens persons too much in admiration; that deifie them, especially if they be in great place, such who will offend God before they will offend them, and whereas for Gods Glory they should deny themselves: they deny themselves and make themselves fooles for men; and to please them by whom they hope to rise deny both wit and honesty.

SER. XI.

honeſtie. This is abhominable Idolatrie, and ſuch are as farre from Heaven and ſalvation, as thoſe that fall before an Idoll, if they repent not. O! If theſe men that ſtudie to pleaſe men, and deny themſelves for them, would be as carefull to pleaſe God as they have beene to pleaſe men, how happy, and what excellent Chriſtians would they bee. As a great man pleaſer in his time ſaid; *If hee had ſerved God as well as he had ſerved his maſter the King in that time; God had not left him ſo in his old yeares.* To ſet up any man ſo high in our affections, as for him to deny our ſelves, cracke our conſciences, and doe things unlawfull, will bee miſerie in the end. *If I pleaſe men* (ſaith *Paul*) *I am not the ſervant of Chriſt.* Hee meaneth ſinfull pleaſing, for their ought to bee ſervice and reſpect, due honour muſt be given unto thoſe who carry Gods Image, our Governours; yea great reſpect and honour, and nothing in this kinde can be too much; but to goe beyond our bounds herein, is to commit Idolatry. As the Heathen did, when the government of *Rome* was turned into an Empire, ſome of their Emperours were made gods by them after *Auguſtus* time, wherein they could not have deviſed to have done them greater wrong, for they all came moſt of them to fearefull ends. It is ill for any man to have God his corrivall, for no greater miſery can befall a man then to be ſet up in Gods roome, ſo to rule a mans honeſtie, will, and conſcience at his pleaſure; for

A Scotiſh Regent before his execution.

Gal. 1. 10.

for God is a Jealous God, and will not endure ſuch Idolatry.

And ſo in the next place, they frame Chriſt an Idoll, in taking him without his croſſe: they will be of the true Religion, but when they come to ſuffer any thing, if it be but a frowne, a reproch or diſgrace, they give out and fall backe. Such they frame to themſelves an Idoll, a falſe Chriſt: for the knowledge of Chriſt is never without the Croſſe, ſome croſſe or other, ſome perſecution or other in ſome kinde. *All who will live godly in Chriſt ſhall ſuffer perſecution.* A man may live godly and not ſuffer perſecution, but he that will live godly in Chriſt, ſo as hee ſheweth his nature to be altered, carrying an Antipathy againſt all falſe courſes, and ſo as the world may conceive that he is ſuch an one, it is impoſſible that he ſhould live in the world without perſecution: becauſe he ſhall meete with thoſe that are of an oppoſite diſpoſition. Therefore to frame a ſmooth Chriſt, all comfort, is to frame a falſe Chriſt and a falſe Religion, to frame an Idol that hath no truth in it, that never was, nor never will be to the end of the world.

5. *Such Idolize who profeſſing Chriſt will not ſuffer any thing for his ſake.*

2 Tim. 3. 12.

Againe, unconverted perſons (eſpecially) are prone to another Idolatry, to ſet up their owne wits and wills inſtead of Gods. So as there is not a greater enemy to Religion then our owne conceits and wills, which will have a modell of Religion of our owne braine, which muſt ſtand let what will come of it.

6. *Idolatry is committed when we ſet up our owne wits and wills inſtead of Gods.*

This

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This is the fault especially of great learned persons, who take upon them conceits and apprehensions of things; and then dote upon these brats of their owne braine. And so for will, to have our owne will in all things, as the speech is, *My mind to me a kingdome is*: I will have my wil, whatsoever come of it. This is Idolatrie, for whosoever will come to Heaven, must deny his will: The first lesson in Christs schoole is selfe-denyall; Deny all of wit and will, to have no more wit and wisdome, especially in divine things then God will teach us: and no more will, which is distinct and opposite to Christs will, but to bring our wills to his in all things. When men will goe about great affaires, and set upon things in their owne wit and strength, never praying nor depending upon God for a blessing, this is a kind of Idolizing of parts, to worke out things by pollicy, strength, wit, and parts. As that Heathen Atheist could say, *Let cowards pray if they will*: but his successe was answerable. So is it not the common Atheisme of the world, they goe about things in confidence of their wit and parts, and so hope to attaine a glorious issue: whereas God who overthrowes *Babels*, takes delight to confound all their devices: it is his daily practise, *To send the rich empties away, and exalt the humble and meeke.* Those who set upon things rashly without prayer, as though they were Lords of all, and without dependance upon God, promising themselves

Mat. 16. 24.

Luk. 1. 52.

good

good ſucceſſe, they make Idols of themſelves: as a proud man is an Idoll, *hee worſhips himſelfe*, whilſt he leanes to his owne wit, plots and parts: carnall men thus Idolize themſelves.

Againe you have ſome who are none of the worſt, who commit this great ſinne of Idolatry by truſting to the outward performances and taskes of Religion, thinking that God muſt needs be bound unto them when they have done ſo many taskes, read and prayd, or heard ſo many ſermons, or done a good deed. But heere lyeth the ſpirituall ſubtilty, in that they ſet up theſe things too high, when if they finde not that ſucceſſe they looke for, then they inwardly murmur againſt God: when rather all theſe things ſhould be done with a ſpirit of Humility and ſubjection, uſing them onely as meanes whereupon we expect Gods bleſſing, craving his aſſiſtance and ſtrength to doe them in a holy and a ſelfe-denying manner: when we doe otherwiſe, and truſt to the outward taskes and performances we doe, wee make them Idols. And you have many that goe along with outward performances, who never come to a dram of grace, becauſe they truſt to the outward performances, and looke not to the life and ſoule of them, which is the Spirit of God aſſiſting, quickning, ſtrengthning bleſſing them. The life of a Chriſtian is a perpetuall dependance upon God in the uſe of meanes, and not an Idolizing of them, to bee careleſſe

7. *Idolatry is committed by truſting to the performances and taskes of Religion.*

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careleſſe when he hath done his taske.

But a more ſubtill Idolatrie then this is of an other kinde, when we truſt too much to the worke of grace, and rely not upon God in Chriſt in the matter of juſtification and acceptation to life everlaſting, which is a fault both

1. Before,
2. After Converſion.

8. *It is Idolatry ſo to truſt to the worke of grace as to neglect juſtificatiō and acceptation to life everlaſting.*

1. First before Converſion. When we thinke we have not done ſo much good, and beene ſufficiently humbled, and therefore that God will not be mercifull to us: as if Chriſt muſt take us with dowry of good deeds, or elſe hee cannot, whereas all grace is promiſed, upon our entry and comming into the Covenant of grace, upon our believing, when we come with emptie hearts and hands: *The poore* (ſaith Chriſt) *receive the Goſpell*, and *thoſe that are loſt, Chriſt is ſent to ſave them, and to call in the weary and heavie laden.*

Mat. 11.5. Mat. 9.13. Mat. 11.28.

2. And after Converſion; thoſe that are in the ſtate of grace oftentimes want that comfort in the maine point of juſtification and acceptation to life everlaſting which they ſhould have: becauſe they looke into their imperfections, ſeeing this and that want, and ſo are ſwallowed up of diſcomfort; whereas if we had all the graces in the world, yet we muſt live by Faith, relying upon the merits of Chriſt. For our good works bring us not to Heaven as a cauſe, but onely are helps and comforts to us in our walking to Heaven. For if we had all

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the ſinnes of all men, yet Chriſts all-ſufficient Righteouſneſſe is ſufficient for to doe them all away, if wee can goe out of our ſelves, and cleave to that. Therefore in trouble of conſcience, we muſt not looke either to our good or our ill, but to Gods infinite Mercy, and to the infinite ſatisfaction of our bleſſed Saviour the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, there as it were looſing our ſelves, ſeeing our ſinnes as mountaines drowned in the infinite ſea of his Mercy. The blood of Chriſt, that will pacifie and ſtay the conſcience, nothing elſe can give reſt to our ſoules. If we looke to our workes and to the meaſure of our ſanctification, what ſaith holy *Paul* in the like caſe? *Yea doubtleſſe, and I count all things but loſſe, for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Ieſus my Lord, for whom I have ſuffered the loſſe of all things, and doe count them but dung that I may winne Chriſt*, even his Righteouſneſſe and beſt works; therefore there is no regard to be had of them in that caſe. Wherefore when wee would ſpeake comfort to a diſtreſſed conſcience, wee muſt not looke to his ill or good, but to the command. *This is his command that we believe:* and looke to the allſufficiencie of God in Chriſt, and the promiſes, whereby we honour God in giving him the glory of his truth, and depart with comfort. Therefore though wee hate groſſe Idolatry, yet we ſee there are many wayes wherein the ſoule may bee ſeduced, whereby we may come very neere that ſinne

Phil. 3. 8.

1 Iohn. 3. 23.

which our soule hateth; by trusting too much to something out of God.

Vse. 5. *How to reforme our selves so as to flie from Idolatry.*

If then the case be thus, how shall we come to reforme it (for a Use of *Direction*) so as to flie from all Idolatrie, and to say with *Ephraim*, *What have I now any more to doe with Idols?*

1. First of all doe but consider Gods hatred unto all sorts of Idolaters: for he accounts such to hate him, and so accordingly punisheth them. In the second Commandement those that are given to Idolatrie in any kinde, are such as hate God, which is a horrible thing, and yet notwithstanding this is the disposition of all such as are Idolaters; so farre forth as they are Idolaters they hate God: for the more we know God, the more we shall hate all Idols, *What have I now any more to doe with Idols?*

2. Labour to grow in the sound knowledge of God and of Christ, and of their all-sufficiency. Marke S. *Paules* method, *Coloss.* 2. and in other places, when he would draw us from all outward thiugs, he speakes gloriously of the fullnesse of Christ. *In him dwelleth all the fullnesse of the God-head bodily*: and, *In him you are compleat*. When he would draw them from, *touch not, taste not, handle not, worshipping of Angels, and from counterfeit humility*, hee labours to dispossesse them of these Idolatrous conceits, and to possesse them of the fullnesse of Christ. If in him we have fullnesse, why should we looke for any thing out of him? If we be compleat in him, If all fullnesse be in him, why doe wee seeke

Col. 2. 9.

ſeeke any thing out of that fullneſſe? Thus the holy Apoſtle ſhutteth up his firſt Epiſtle, *Babes keepe you from Idols.* What is promiſed there? Chriſt is eternall life, all is in him, whereupon preſently comes this; *Babes keepe you from Idols.* If life and happineſſe and all be in Chriſt, If we be compleat in him, and the fullneſſe of all be in him, why ſhould we goe out of him for any thing? When God would perſwade *Abraham* to leave all Idolatrie, and all things elſe, to depend wholly upon him, what doth he firſt poſſeſſe him with? *I am God allſufficient*, &c. know God in covenant allſufficient, and Chriſt in the fullneſſe of his high perfections as mediator, in whom is all fullneſſe and life eternall, in whom we are compleat: we ſhall then be ſo farre from going out of him for any thing, as we ſhall be of the ſame mind with *Ephraim*, what have I now any more to doe with other Jntercеſſors and Mediators? what have I to doe with will-worſhip? what need I goe to other curſed meanes, when God is allſufficient? It is the ſcope of the new covenant of grace that we ſhould glory in God onely, who hath made Chriſt unto us, *Wiſdome, Righteouſneſſe, Sanctification* and *Redemption*. And all this, becauſe that whoſoever glorieth in him ſhould not goe out of him for any thing. The more we know therefore the fullneſſe of Chriſt, and Gods mercy in him, the more wee ſhall abhorre all Idolatry, with the kindes and degrees of it.

1 John. 5. 21.

Gen. 17. 1.

The ſcope of the new Covenant.
1 Cor. 1. 30.

Another helpe and meanes to cure this diſ-

poſition in us is, to know that we are naturally wondrous prone to it in one degree or another, It is reckoned up, *Gal.* 5. as a worke of the fleſh, and naturally man hath a working fancy, to ſet up ſomewhat in his heart and underſtanding above, and beſides God; Imaginations to adulterate things. Men live by ſence, and Imagination is next to ſenſe, ſo that naturally all men are Idolaters before converſion in one kinde or other: and dote ſo upon their owne, that they will not be driven out of themſelves unto God in Chriſt, without a great deale of grace. As men naturally love the childe of their owne body, ſo men love the children of their owne braine. *Queſt.* What is the reaſon that it is ſo hard to convert a Papiſt? *Anſw.* Becauſe it is will-worſhip, a device of their owne braine, ſuiting their naturall will and appetite. And what makes them ſo furious (as all Idolaters are cruell) though they be mild of their owne nature, yet as Idolaters they are cruell? It is becauſe it is a device of their owne braine, a brat, a childe of their owne begetting; wherefore they ſtrive to maintaine it, becauſe it is their owne. Let us therefore conceive this much, that it is no eaſie matter to free the ſoule from Idolatry, and all the degrees of this curſed diſpoſition, this will make us beg earneſtly the Spirit of God, by which onely we ſhall ſubdue this Idolatrous proud conceit, and lay our ſelves open to Chriſt, to be diſpoſed of as hee pleaſeth. Beg the Spirit onely, whereby wee

ſhall

ſhall mortifie the curſed deeds of the fleſh: for, nature will never ſubdue nature; the Spirit of God therefore is that which can, and muſt free us from all dregs and tainture of this curſed diſpoſition, which the Jewes were ſo ſcourged for, and hardly driven from. Rom. 8. 3.

Againe, conſider Gods puniſhments in this kinde, as we ſee, *Rev.* 9. 20. Where the *Turke* is ſaid to be raiſed up againſt all theſe Idolaters, that would not be kept from worſhipping the Divell, and the Image of the beaſt. Yet for all this, it is ſaid *they did not repent.* And ſo the Jewiſh Church was ſtill puniſhed with enemies raiſed up againſt them for their Idolatry. And it is to be expected that the Idolatry of theſe weſterne Churches will at length pull downe Antichriſt himſelfe, which muſt be before the converſion of the *Iewes.* For what hinders their converſion now? The world is full of Idolaters, even Chriſtians; and therfore there muſt be a confuſion of Antichriſts Idolatrous worſhip before the converſion of the *Iewes*, who will not returne whilſt that ſcandall is in their eye. Therefore that we may helpe forward that glorious worke, let us labour as much as we can to purge the Church of this, in drawing others from Idolatry, that we may helpe to make way for thoſe glorious times a comming: for this Scripture eſpecially hath relation unto the calling of the *Iewes*, not to be fullfilled till then, when *Ephraim ſhall ſay, what have I now any more to doe with Idols?* with that for 4.

which wee have beene ſo plagued for in former times.

5. And withall let us conſider this, that the end of all falſe worſhip (when it is left) is griefe and ſhame, befooling and ſhaming of our ſelves for it. *Ephraim* (at length) *ſhall ſay, what have I any more to doe with Idols?* to cheriſh pride and ſelfe conceit? which if ever I come to Heaven I muſt renounce, hating my ſelfe for my owne pride and folly.

6. And ſo for Idolaters themſelves, why ſhould wee conſort our ſelves with theſe, of whom we ſhall ſay one day, what have we now any more to doe with them? we muſt be ſeperated from them here, or in Hell live with them for ever. What will then be the hell of hell? Mutuall curſing of one another; thy familiarity and acquaintance, thy provocations and allurements brought me into theſe torments. If we belong to God, late or ſoone, there muſt be theſe ſpeeches, what have I now any more to doe with ſuch and ſuch lying vanities?

Exhortation. Therefore let us not thinke will-worſhip a

Popery what? flight matter; for we ſee Popery is nothing elſe but a bundle of mans devices? we ſee in Scripture, when the deareſt friends of Chriſt came unto him with devices of their owne and good intentions, Chriſt notwithſtanding ſaw the Divell in them. *Peter* made a great confeſſion,

Mat 16.16. *Thou art the Sonne of the living God*, and then he came, *Maſter ſpare thy ſelfe*: whereunto Chriſt replied, *Get thee behind me Satan*. God is never more

more provoked then when men thinke to honour him with their owne devices, ſtabliſhing a falſe, and neglecting his owne true worſhip. And there is uſually little amendment of theſe kind of perſons, becauſe they carry with them a ſhew of wiſdome, as *Paul* ſaith, and great Humility: which things being ſo carried with a ſhew of ſome grace and wiſdome (though they bee deſperate folly in the concluſion) men hardly will part withall. As we ſee of corporall Adultery, few of them are reclaimed; becauſe it hath a bewitching alluring power: which is moſt true of the ſpirituall Adulterers, there are few of them reclaimed, untill God by ſome ſevere judgement alter and bring downe the proud imagination to ſerve him as he will be ſerved, ſo as to ſay with *Ephraim* here, *What have I now any more to doe with Idols?*

Col. 2. 18.

Corporall and ſpirituall Adulterers are hardly reclaimed.

Well that wee may abhorre Idolatry the more, conſider two or three direct places. *Who required theſe things at your hands*, ſaith God, when they thinke to pleaſe him with voluntary deviſed things, this will ſtrike them dumbe then, the things that God requires being ſo eaſie and ſo few, yet wee to omit them all and to deviſe new things of our owne: our reward ſhall be, *Who required theſe things at your hands?* And then againe ſaith God, *In vaine they worſhip me teaching for my precepts the devices of men.* See then the vanity of Idolaters, who though they would doe nothing in vaine, yet

Iſa. 1. 12.

Mat. 15. 9.

doe all their will-worſhip in vaine. It is not onely Idolatry, but obſtinate Idolatry, the Romiſh doctrine: *We would have cured Babel, but ſhe would not be cured.* Is this a light cauſe of our comming out of *Babylon?* doe we leave them for trifles, when they ſtand guilty of abhominable Idolatry? you may ſee here, if ſo be *Ephraim* out of holy affection ſay, *what have I now any more to doe with Idols?* What to think and judge of thoſe that would bring God and Idols together; if *Ephraim* had beene of the temper that many men now are, he might have ſaid, tuſh what need we care for Idols, Crucifixes and the like? there is not ſuch a diſtance betwixt them and us, why may not both Religions ſtand together? This new fangled niceneſſe is but the diſtempered devices of ſome few giddy headed men who know not what they would have. This is the wiſdome of many men in our times, who reckon that there is not an eternall irreconcileable diſtance betweene light and darkeneſſe, the ſervice of God and that of Idols. *We cannot ſerve two maſters,* ſaith Chriſt. Yes ſay they wee may ſerve two maſters, Anti-chriſt and Chriſt, God and Beliall. O but what ſaith *Ephraim? What have I now any more to doe with Idols?* There can be no mixture you know where there is abhomination. That Church *Reve.* 3. which was neither hot nor cold may paralell many now in our times, who are neither hot nor cold, Papiſts nor Proteſtantes, but politicke Atheiſts, who will

Ier. 51. 9.

How ſome men ſlight Idolatry.

Mat. 6. 24.

will be both or neither, whatſoever may beſt ſerve and advance their worldly ends. How doth God looke upon ſuch? (ſaith he) *I will ſpew them out of my mouth:* God hates ſuch moſt of all, *now I would thou wert either hot or cold.* If this be the affection of Gods people towards Idols and Idolaters, an utter averſation, and ſhall we thinke to jumble and mingle contrary things together, to ſerve God and the Divell, Chriſt and Anti-chriſt.

That in ſome leſſer matters we may uſe our owne opinions.

Thus we ſee what to thinke of the temper of theſe men, in lighter matters indeed wee may enjoy our own private opinions in ſome things. As Saint *Paul* ſaith in leſſer things, *If any men be otherwiſe minded, God ſhall reveale it unto him.* Phil 3.15. But vvhen he comes to the point of juſtification by Chriſt in Gods worſhip: vvhat ſaith he? *If any man be otherwiſe minded, God ſhall reveale it?* No, but *if I or an Angell from Heaven teach otherwiſe, let him bee accurſed.* Gal.1.8. Now vvhen men teach another doctrine and worſhip, joyning with groſſe Idolaters in that worſhip, there we muſt be of *Pauls* ſpirit, *If I or an Angell from Heaven teach otherwiſe, let him be accurſed.* The Holy Ghoſt at firſt appeared in the forme and ſhape of a Dove which is a meeke and milde creature, that hath no tallons to hurt with. Mat.3.16. Yet notwithſtanding at another time, hee appeared in *fiery tongues*, to ſhew that the ſame Spirit that in leſſer things maintaineth peace and love, when it is ſet againſt any ſinne, eſpecially againſt that ſinne of ſinnes Act.2.3.

Idolatry

Idolatry, which brings Gods vengeance upon Kingdomes and states, and rootes them out; there the Holy Ghost must appeare in fire, that element must be in the hearts of people against that sinne: that though to persons that have their slips, and in lesser matters there must be the spirit of a dove: yet there must be in men the spirit of courage, indignation, abhomination and hatred unto the Idolatry of the times. That wee may say from our hearts with *Ephraim, What have I now any more to doe with Idols?*

Conclusion.

Therefore let us joyne with those that we shall live for ever with in Heaven, and goe in the best courses, and wee shall never need to feare seperation, nor want incouragements to well doing. Thus shall we neither grieve nor be ashamed to say with *Ephraim, What have I now any more to doe with Idols?* At the length the Kings of the earth who adore the whore, they shall come and eate her very flesh. So it will be the end of those that raigne in other mens consciences, and in a manner will be accounted gods, that all which is gotten with wrong to God, shall be renounced with griefe, shame, and detestation of the persons of those that make Idols of others, and will be made Idols in the hearts of others, thinking themselves not enough respected, unlesse they command the conscience: the end of such cannot be good, all this must end in loathing, shame and detestation. *What have I now any more to doe with Idols?*

Rev. 17. 16.

Idols? ſaid *Ephraim*; and what have I now any more to doe with ſuch and ſuch profaneneſſe, hypocriſie, double-dealing and the like, ſhall ſuch perſons (thus ſinnefull) ſay one day, with ſhame and horror of conſcience. Wherefore let us meet God betimes, and renounce our Idols of all ſorts, that God may come *to heare us, obſerve us: and bee as a greene firre tree unto us*, &c. Whereof if God pleaſe, wee ſhall heare more the next time.

* * *

The end of the eleventh Sermon.

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Sermon.

THE TWELFTH SERMON.

Hos. 14. 9.

Ephraim shall say, what have I any more to doe with Idols? I have heard him and observed him: I am like a greene firre tree, from me is thy fruit found.

THE words (as wee heard heretofore) are a gratious answer unto the prayer which God himselfe by his Spirit had dictated to *Ephraim:* as likewise a reward of *Ephraims* Reformation. Ayded by grace, *Ephraim* shall say,

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SER. XII.

What have I now any more to doe with Idols? God will heare him and observe him, and be like a greene firre tree unto him. For, (saith God,) *from mee shall Ephraims fruit be found.* Whereby we see that whensoever God doth alter the soule by his grace, there he also breeds divorce and division betweene it and all Idolatry, a disposition in some sort like himselfe, having those Sympathies and antipathies hee hath towards sinne and goodnesse. Now because God is a jealous God, and cannot abide Idols; therefore *Ephraim* being sanctified by the Spirit of God, is minded as God is, *What have I any more to doe with Idols?*

1. God hath framed the soule that it may injoy the cheefe good, and avoid the cheefe ill especially, for pettie goods and pettie ils are not so behoovefull: Yet notwithstanding God will have us avoid all ill, and imbrace all good, and he hath made the soule into an answerable condition. Therefore hath hee planted affections therein tending to good; as Love, and Joy and delight, especially made for the imbracing of the maine good, thereby to goe out of it selfe, and close with that maine cheefe good, in closing wherewith it may be happy.

2. And then to avoid the cheefe ill, sinne and damnation, hee hath planted affections of aversation, abhorring, hatred, griefe and the like. Thus hath he framed the soule for these maine ends, without which affections, the soule were as *Mare mortuum*, that dead sea. The affections

affections are the wings and the winde of the ſoule, that carrie it unto all which it is carried unto: eſpecially when the winde of Gods Spirit blowes upon it, then it is carried out of it ſelfe, for of it ſelfe it cannot love or hate as it ſhould, but God muſt raiſe the affections, and lay them downe againe. Wee have not the managing of our owne hearts; grace teacheth us to doe all.

The particular then here, is indignation and hatred, *What have I now any more to doe with Idols?* So that the proper affection in Gods children, which ſhould be converſant about that which is ill, and ſinnefully ill, is hatred and indignation, here is hatred with indignation, the extent of the affection.

The reaſon whereof is, when Gods children are once converted, they have a new nature put into them, like unto Chriſt whoſe Spirit they have, what he hates they hate. Hee hates all ſin, and nothing but ſin, hee hates the Divell himſelfe for ſin, and no further. *Reaſon.* 1.

Then againe, when once they are Gods children, they have a new life put into them, which hath antipathie to all that is contrary to it. Every life in any creature hath antipathie to every enemy thereof. There is antipathie in Doves to Birds of prey, and in the Lambe to the Wolfe, becauſe they are enemies to the life and being of them. So in the ſoule of a Chriſtian ſo farre as grace is renewed, there is an antipathie, averſation and abhorring of that which is contrary. 2.

contrary. What have I to doe with ſinne in any kinde? when grace hath altered the diſpoſition of a mans heart, then ſinne and he are two: two indeed in the moſt oppoſite tearmes that may be, what have I any more to doe with my former delightfull ſinnes? we are two now, for we were before nothing but ſinne. And indeed where this hatred is not, there men may leave ſinne, becauſe ſinne leaves them: but this is not enough, God would have us to hate it with indignation, what have I now any more to doe with it?

Queſt. But how ſhould we come to have this true hatred of ſinne, as *Ephraim* ſhould have?

Anſw. 1. *Helps to hate ſinne.* Amongſt thoſe helpes formerly named, this is a maine one: to repreſent to the ſoule, (as the ſoule is quicke and nimble in ſuch apprehenſions) the odiouſneſſe of ſinne, that it is a truly hatefull thing; and therefore that our affection of hatred cannot be better ſet nor imployed upon any object then that of ſinne. For let us conſider that it is not onely ill in it ſelfe, defiling the ſoule, and hindering communion with God, but it is alſo the cauſe of all ills, being the ill of ills, as God is the good of goods. For our troubles and terrors of conſcience, wee may thanke ſinne, and for all that we ſuffer every day in our conditions of life; what is all but the fruite of our owne wayes? *Wherefore ſuffereth living man,* (ſaith the Prophet,) *man ſuffereth for his ſinne. Thine owne inventions have brought theſe things upon thee; therefore they are bitter unto thee,*

Lam. 3. 39. Jer. 4. 18.

thee, they ſhall pierce thy bowels. Shall we not therefore hate that which is the cauſe of all miſchiefe to us? If we had an enemy, eſpecially if he were a ſoothing falſe enemie, that under pretence of love ſhould ſeeke our bane and ruine, and joyne with our worſt enemies, would we not hate ſuch an enemy? Sinne is the greateſt enemy which we have in the world, and doth us more harme then the Divell himſelfe, for it betrayeth us to the Divell, and under pretence of favouring and pleaſing our nature, betrayes us. It is a falſe deceitfull enemy, which commeth not in an ugly ſhape, but cloſes with the ſoule in a kinde of conjugall love, *Dalilah* like inticing and alluring us, whereby it hath the more advantage and ſtrength, in that it appeares in a lovely, pleaſing, and not in an imperious commanding manner: therfore it ſhould be the more hatefull to us. Shall we not hate ſuch an enemy as alwayes dogs us, and hinders us, hinders us from doing any thing well, and puts us on to all that is ill. It is ſuch an enemy that we cannot goe about to pray or doe any good thing but it hangs upon us and clogs us in all our performances. If a man knew that ſuch a one as made love to him and all his, were his great grand enemy, aiming at his deſtruction, would a man ever love ſuch a man? thy baſe, falſe, revengfull, covetous, worldly heart, it joynes with Sathan, without which hee could not hurt thee. Shall a man cheriſh that which betrayes him to his worſt enemy the Divell?

and then ſhould he cheriſh that which makes a breach betwixt him and his beſt friend? If a man ſaw one ſo maliciouſly evill towards him, as to ſow diſſention by all meanes hee could betwixt him and his beſt honourable friend by vvhom hee vvas maintained in all things, vvould not a man hate ſuch a one? vvhat doth ſinne elſe but breed diviſion and emnity betvvixt God and us? and further, vvhen it hath mooved us to doe ill, it cryeth for vengeance againſt us at Gods hands. Conſcience ſoundly avvakened, is alvvayes clamarous to pull ſomevvhat from God againſt us. Are not ſinners juſtly called fooles? either men muſt be Atheiſts to deny all, or elſe if they cheriſh ſinne, they muſt needs be fooles and ſtarke mad if they confeſſe this that they joyne vvith that vvhich is their chiefe enemy. Therefore learne to be vviſe to ſalvation, make not vvith
Pro. 10. 23. *Salomons* foole a ſport of ſinne, of ſvvearing of defiling our ſelves and others, ſeeing God threatneth damnation unto ſuch.

And then againe, avoide all parly and intercourſe with ſinne in the firſt ſuggeſtions; or with wicked perſons that may draw us away. Uſe ſinne ruggedly and harſhly as they doe here, *what have I to doe with Idols?* doe but intertaine parly with it, and it is of ſuch an inſinuating nature, that it will incroach daily, and ſpread over the ſoule ſuddenly, betraying it to the Divell. Therefore uſe it hardly in the firſt beginnings, and avoid Satan in the firſt

ſuggeſtions

ſuggeſtions, if we love the peace of our ſoules, as *Ephraim* here, *what have I any more to doe with Idols?* for as we ſay in the caſe of honeſty. They come to neare that come to have the refuſall. They ſhould not have ſo much hope from a chaſt perſon, there ſhould be ſuch a modeſt carriage, as ſhould not give any one the boldneſſe to adventure in that kind. So if a man carry himſelfe remotely from ſinnfull courſes, he ſhall have a great deale of peace from wicked men, who dare not ſo much as adventure to draw away ſuch a one, they know he is reſolved. Therefore conſtant reſolution againſt all ſinne and wicked men will breed a great deale of peace, ſo as to ſay with *Ephraim*, *what have I any more to doe with Idols?*

Hatred of ſinne whence?

And we muſt know, that this hatred comes from the life of God in us, therefore we muſt by all meanes maintaine ſpirituall life, and then as we grow ſpirituall, we ſhall grow in the deteſtation of ſinne, a ſenſe of joy in good things, with a hatred of all that is contrary. A man can never hate ſinne till he hath the Spirit of Chriſt in him, for there be 3. Quæres, whereof this is the laſt.

3. *Quæres.*

The firſt is ſet down: *Ieremy*. 8. 6. *No man ſaid what have I done?* When conſcience in a man is awakened once, he ſaith, O! what have I done? what caſe am I in? 1.

The ſecond Quære of a wakened conſcience is, *what ſhall I doe?* as that *Act*. 2. *Men and Brethren, what ſhall we doe to be ſaved?* hee 2.

that truely ſaith, *what have I done?* if conſcience be awakened, will alſo ſay, *what ſhall I doe?* you ſhall not need to drive him, vvhen the Queſtion is anſwered, *what ſhall I doe to bee ſaved?* that is by caſting my ſelfe upon God in Chriſt. We need not put the Queſtion, hee will ſay of himſelfe, what have I any more to doe with that which is contrary to that which ſaves me? *What have I to doe with Idols?* this comes in in the laſt place. 1. A man is awakened out of his naturall condition. 2. Then hee goes to God in Chriſt. And then 3. There is a ſpirituall life wrought in him, which ſtirs him up to hate all that is contrary unto it: *What have I now any more to doe with Idols?*

3.

For I have heard him and obſerved him.

I have ſeene and obſerved him, ſome reade the words, but very few, which is thus a very good and pious conſtruction of them: *What have I now any more to doe with Idols?* As if *Ephraim* ſhould ſay, theſe words *I have ſeene him and obſerved him,* that is, becauſe I have ſeene him and obſerved, therefore *what have I now any more to doe with Idols?* As ſoone as a man comes to heare God ſpeake, and to obſerve God, downe goes all Idols, for indeed the reſpect to Idolatry, and any thing that is naught it fals downe in the ſoule, as the knowledge of the true God is lifted up, and as affection to good things are raiſed up in the ſoule. *What have I to doe with Idols any more; I have ſeene and obſerved him:* as *Iob* ſaid of himſelfe when

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hee had ſeene God: *I abhorre my ſelfe and repent in duſt and aſhes.* Much more all falſe courſes, I abhorre them all, now that *I have ſeene and obſerved him.* Iob. 42. 2.

This is a ſafe, pious, and good ſenſe, but the words under correction are fitlieſt applied unto God himſelfe, as if God rather then *Ephraim* ſaid thus, *I will heare him and obſerve him,* I will doe thus and thus, *I will be as a greene firre-tree to ſhade him* from danger, and to make him fruitfull. But you will ſay *Ephraim* cannot caſt away Idols till God reſpect him firſt. Therefore this is promiſed in the ſecond place, *Ephraim* ſhall ſay, *What have I to doe with Idols.* And God ſhall ſay, I have ſeene him, heard him, and obſerved him, when hee hath caſt away Idoles. *Object.*

To this the Anſwer is, indeed in the order of nature God doth firſt ſtirre us up to pray to him, and promiſeth us reſpect and hearing of our prayers, after which we caſt away Idols, but the experience of it is after wee have done the deed. After that we have found God experimentally gratious, protecting and hearing of us, then we caſt away Idols. So this experience a Chriſtian findes, when he abhominates, and rejects ill wayes, then he findes God all-ſufficient, as indeed God is never fully felt and knowne till we renounce all other helps. So the generall point is, *Anſw.*

That nothing is loſt by renouncing Idolatry, and carnall confidence in any worldly thing. *Obſerv.*

For God makes a ſupply in himſelfe, *I will heare him and obſerve him.* Nothing is loſt, for God will be true of his promiſe, *Seeke ye firſt the Kingdome of God and his Righteouſnes, and all other things ſhall be miniſtred unto you.* Mat.6.33. The Truth of God and then his Mercy makes this good. Is not God mercifull to his children when they renounce all falſe confidence? In regard of the truth of his promiſe and mercy, he will make good this, that nothing is loſt by cleaving to him. We reade in the ſtory of our owne times, in King *Edward* the ſixts raigne, the ſame day that there was reformation of Idolatry in *London*, purging of Churches from roodes and Idols. The ſame day was that noble victorie and conqueſt in the North parts over the enemies. So God anſwered their care in reforming things amiſſe with good ſucceſſe.

On the contrary, when we goe on with favouring abuſes and corruptions, yet expecting good ſucceſſe, it is in vaine. Let *Ephraim* come to ſay, *What have I to doe with Idols?* and ſee then whether God will reſpect him or not. Doe Nations or perſons thinke that God will reſpect them or bleſſe them, whilſt they doe that which is abhominable to him. No; when *Ephraim* ſaith, *what have I to doe with Idols?* then preſently comes, God will *heare* and *obſerve* him, and looke to him, as you have it in that gratious promiſe, *The eyes of the Lord are open unto all them that feare him, and his eares* Pſal.34.15.

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are open to their prayers, his *eyes* and his *eares*. Indeed God is all eye and all eare, the beſt friend in the world, cannot have his eye alwayes upon us, the mothers eye cannot be alwayes upon her child, ſhe muſt have a time to ſleepe, when neither her eyes nor eares are open to her childs prayers, it may cry and die in crying ſometimes before ſhee can helpe it. But if we renounce ſinne, wee have a gratious Father, *who will heare us, obſerve us, and ſee us*, and not onely heare and ſee, but as the Scripture phraſe is, doe that that followes all this, where he ſees, he will pitty and relieve, and where he heares, he will pitty and protect.

I have heard him, I have obſerved him.

God will heare when once we renounce ſin. *If I regard iniquity in my heart, God will not heare my prayers*, ſaith *David*. But when I doe not regard iniquity God will heare my prayers. Then a man may know that God will heare him, when once he hath renounced ſinne and comes with cleane hands and heart to God. As it is in *Iſaias*, they were corrupt in their courſe, and yet came to God, but hee rejects all, ſo in the laſt of that Prophecie, he accounts of their Sacrifices, as of the cutting off of a dogs necke, becauſe their hands were full of blood, and they were full of ſinne. Reforme abuſes, let there bee perſonall and nationall Reformation, and then come and reaſon the matter with God, and ſee whether he will regard us or not. The ſpirit it is ſaid, makes requeſts

Pſal. 66. 18.

Iſa. 1.

SER. XII.

Rom. 8. 27. for the Saints, and *God knoweth the meaning of the Spirit, becauſe it makes requeſt according to the will of God.* The ſame Spirit that ſtirrs us up to amend our lives and fly Idolatrous courſes, the ſame Spirit ſtirs us up to pray to God according to the will of God, and then God heares the deſires of his owne Spirit. Of all judgements in the world this is the greateſt to pray and not to be heard, for when wee are in miſery our remedy is prayer: now when that which ſhould be our remedy is not regarded, what a pittifull thing is that? Now here is an excellent bleſſing ſet downe to pray, and for God to heare, *I will heare him and obſerve him.* Becauſe then God and *Ephraim* were of one minde and joyne in one, therefore God cannot but heare and regard *Ephraim*, being of his minde to love and to hate what hee loves and hates. As ſoone as ever the *Prodigall* began to hate his former courſes, the Father came out to meete him, and ſo of *David, I ſaid I will confeſſe my ſinnes to God,* (*I ſaid*) that is, in my heart I reſolved to confeſſe to God, *and thou forgaveſt mine iniquity*, God heard his reſolution. We cannot elſe entertaine a full purpoſe to goe to God, unleſſe there be a ceſſation from ſinne: the *Prodigall* for all his contrition, was afraid to bee ſhaken of his Father for his diſſolute life: O! but the Father provides a banquet: ſo it is when we turne to God and reſolve a new life, to caſt away our Idolatries, and former abhominations, preſently *God heares*

Luk. 16.

Pſal. 32. 3.

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us and obſerves us, and is ready to meet us.

There is an excellent place even touching *Ephraim* himſelfe, *I have ſurely heard Ephraim bemoaning himſelfe, thou haſt chaſtiſed mee, and I was chaſtiſed as a Bullock unaccuſtomed to the yoake, turne thou me to thee and I ſhall bee turned, thou art the Lord my God*, &c. *Is Ephraim a deare ſonne, is he a pleaſant child, for ſince I ſpake againſt him I doe earneſtly remember him ſtill; therefore my bowels are troubled for him, I will have mercy upon him.* If *Ephraim* beginne to bemoane himſelfe for his folly, preſently followes, that Gods bowels are turned to him, ſo it is ſaid of *Ephraim* here, after hee had renounced Idols, Gods bowels are turned towards him, *I have heard him and obſerved him.* Which yeelds us a ſweet and comfortable conſideration, to turne to God from all our ſinfull courſes, becauſe God is ſo ready to forgive, and to forgive great ſinnes. What if our ſinne be Idolatry, the grand ſinne of the firſt Table: yet if *Ephraim* ſay, *what have I to doe with Idols* (though it be ſpirituall adultery) yet if *Ephraim* beginne to renounce Idolatry, God will ſay, *I have heard him and obſerved him.* If your ſinnes *were as red as crimſon* (ſaith God) *I will make them white as wooll*, &c, Crimſon ſinnes, double dyed ſins, it is no matter what they are, if wee come to God, there is more mercy in him then ſin in us. If *Ephraim* ſay, what have I to doe with my former evill courſes, *God will heare him and obſerve him.*

Ier. 31. 18.

Iſa. 1. 18.

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It is never better with a Chriſtian, then when he hath renounced all wicked courſes, though he thinkes himſelfe undone if he leave his former *Dalilah* delights, but there is no ſuch matter, for we ſhall finde a hundred fold more in God, as Chriſt ſpeakes, *Whoſoever leaves father or mother, brother or ſiſter, houſe or kindred for me, ſhall have a hundred fold in this world*, that is, they ſhall have it in contentment and grace, in peace of conſcience, and perhaps in the things of this life in another kinde. What loſt *Abraham*, when he obeyed God, and forſooke his fathers houſe? God was all-ſufficient for him, he grew a rich man. And what loſt hee by giving *Iſaake* to God? he received his ſonne againe, of whom there came an innumerable ſeed. And what loſt holy *David* in waiting for the time that he ſhould come unto the Kingdome without making haſte, he came quietly to the poſſeſſion of the crowne: whereas *Ieroboam* who made more haſte, after God had told him he ſhould raigne, hee was curſed in his government, and none of his poſterity came to good. There is nothing loſt by depending and waiting upon God, and renouncing of carnall confidence. We think naturally we are undone, O! there is no ſuch matter, as *David* ſpeakes, *When my father and mother forſaketh me, yet the Lord taketh me up.* As we know in the Goſpell, when the blinde poore man was excommunicated and caſt out, after he had ſpoke ſomewhat ſtoutely to the *Phariſees, will ye alſo be his Diſciples?*

Mat. 19. 29.

Pſal. 27. 10

Iohn. 9.

ples? yet then Chriſt takes him preſently into his company, being expelled by them, what loſt he by this? So when Iſraell had loſt all their fleſh-pots in *Ægypt*, they had no loſſe, for God provided them Manna from Heaven, and what loſt they by that? they had Angels food inſtead of their garlicke and onyons.

I have obſerved him.

That is, I will have a ſpeciall eye to him, I will looke to him in all conditions and ſtates whatſoever: God never ſlumbers nor ſleepes, like the Maſter of the houſe in the Parable, who when the poore man came for bread, all the reſt being aſleepe is awake, and raiſed up by the importunity of the poore man. So the great Maſter of the family of Heaven and Earth that governes all, hee wakes day and night and never ſleepes; herein going beyond the care of the deareſt friends we have in the world, for they muſt have a time to ſleepe, the mother though ſhe love the childe as her owne bowells, yet notwithſtanding ſhee muſt have a reſting time, and perhaps in that time the childe may miſcarry: but God alwayes obſerves, his eye is alwayes upon his children, they are before him, written in the palmes of his hands; he hath them in his eye: as in *Exodus*, you have there God brought in obſerving the children of *Iſraell*: *I have ſeene, I have ſeene the affliction of my people Iſraell*; they thought themſelves neglected of God, but he tells *Moſes*, *I have ſeene, I have ſeene*, I know it very well, hee adds knowledge

Luk. 11. 5.

Iſa. 49. 16.

Exo. 3. 7.

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knowledge to ſight. So there is no affliction in this world to Gods children, but God in ſeeing ſees, as before he heares the groanes and ſighs, ſo he ſees the moſt intimate inward affliction whatſoever that afflicts the ſoule, as they were grieved in very ſoule at the tyranny of *Pharoah*, Oh but God in ſeeing hee ſees, whoſe eyes are ten thouſand times brighter then the Sunne. This is a conſolation, when one thinks that no man ſees and regards: alas, what ſhall become of me? Why ſhould any man ſay ſo that hath God to go too, who is all eye, and all eare. God heares and ſees, his eares are alwayes open, as it is often ſhewed, eſpecially *Pſal.* 34. 15. It is ſaid, *His eares are open to their prayers, and his eyes to ſee their afflictions.*

Queſt. But with what kinde of eye doth God ſee the afflictions of his children.

Sol. He ſees them with a tender compaſſionate eye, for he aboundeth in thoſe affections which he hath put into a Father and a Mother: there is no Mother would ſuffer her childe to miſcarry if ſhee could helpe it, God ſees ſurely ſome afflictions are for our good, or he would releeve us, for as he hath a compaſſionate eye, ſo he hath a tender heart, and a powerfull hand. He ſees wicked men alſo, but his eyes in regard of them are like a flame of fire, not onely becauſe he is quickſighted, but becauſe he ſees with a revengfull eye, and as his eyes are like a flame of fire, ſo likewiſe he hath feet of braſſe to tread them to pouder. And

Reve 1. 14, 15.

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And this likewiſe is no little part of our comfort, for when we ſuffer any thing in this world, it is from ill men for the moſt part, except it be in thoſe afflictions wherein we more immediately deale with God, as in ſickneſſe, &c. But in perſecution in the world, our trouble lies with men: therefore it is our comfort, God ſees our trouble and their malice, and as he is ready to helpe the one, ſo he is to revenge the other. *Vſe. 1.*

And as it is a point of comfort, ſo of great incouragement to be bold in Gods cauſe, what ſhall we be baſer then the baſe creatures? take but a dog in his maſters ſight, you ſee how hee will fight. Take the meaneſt and baſeſt creature, when it hath a ſuperiour nature to it ſelfe, that is wiſer and greater, that incourageth and ſets it on, that it knowes will ſee it take no harme, theſe baſe creatures will be couragious, which otherwiſe if it had none to ſet it on, had no courage at all, at leaſt not ſo much. And ſhall we in the ſight of God, and when we are ſet in his quarrell, and have his incouragement and his command, with promiſe of his preſence and aſſiſtance flinch and flie of then? It argues a great deale of atheiſme and infidelity of heart. God ſees mee and lookes on mee while I fight, and while I ſtand for his cauſe: Gods cauſe is true and juſt, God ſees me, and he ſees who oppoſeth mee. In regard of the eye of God therefore, let us be couragious in theſe things that are agreeable to the mind of God, what- *Vſe. 2.*

ſoever

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ſoever they be, whether matters of juſtice or piety.

Vſe. 3. Againe if God have ſuch an eare to heare us, let us have an eare to heare him, and an eye to looke to him; let us have *Moſes* eye, to looke on him who is inviſible, his eye is upon us, and let our eye be to him, both may be together. When theſe two eyes meet, when my heart tells me that God ſeeth me, and that I ſee God looking upon me, this makes couragious. Therefore as God heares and ſees us, ſo we muſt have an eye to ſee him that is inviſible. And ſo wee paſſe from theſe words: *I have heard him and obſerved him*, and what the Prophets meaning is; *I have heard him and will heare him: I have obſerved him and will obſerve him:* For they containe a perpetuall action in God, not that he hath, and will not doe it now: but what he hath done and will doe, that hee ſets downe here in borrowed ſpeeches, for he ſaith alſo,

I will be like a greene firre tree to him, from mee is thy fruit found.

God will be *like a greene firre tree* in regard of ſhadow, a *Firre tree* is a high tree, a goodly ſmooth tree, barren in regard of fruit, but it hath thicke leaves, which hinders raine from falling upon thoſe who reſt under the ſhadow thereof, and likewiſe keepes the Sunne from annoying them, ſo it is a fit tree for ſhadow, and the fitter becauſe it hath no fruit, for uſually thoſe trees which ſpend not themſelves this way, they

ſpend

ſpend themſelves in leaves, and have a perpetual greeneneſſe, which is ſupplied with that which ſhould be fruit in fruitfull trees. Therefore he ſets it downe by this compariſon of a *firre tree*, that ſo God will keepe backe all ſhowers, tempeſts and ſtormes, and all annoying hear, and he will doe it perpetually, as the firre tree hath a perpetuall greeneneſſe, and he will doe it with pleaſure and delight, as it is a delightfull ſhadow. But becauſe the *Firre tree* hath no fruit on it, God will not onely be a ſhadow to his children to keepe ill from them, but he will be a fruitfull tree to them. *From me* (ſaith God) *ſhall thy fruit be found*, that is, whatſoever good thou doeſt, thou ſhalt have it from me, all fruitfull comfort comes from me, and all grace; whatſoever is good for thee for proſperity of ſoule or body, all is from me. So we ſee how God conveyeth himſelfe and his mercy here by ſweet compariſons, dealing very familiarly with us, and ſpeaking to us in our owne language: wee will take both in order as they lye.

God will be as a *firre tree* in regard of ſhadow to the paſſenger, and keeping off of ſtormes, the great God, and the good God who is goodneſſe it ſelfe, hath provided in this world, not onely good for us, but hath alſo promiſed defences againſt all annoyances. In the compariſon it ſelfe we will obſerve ſomewhat concerning the goodneſſe of God, for as in this life we are ſubject to many inconveniences, wants

and

and necessities, so God hath supply for all, even outward necessities; wee are subject to cold, for that we have the element of fire: we are subject to stormes, he hath provided garments and skill to make them: so in our travells he hath provided some trees especially to shelter us. Wee cannot name any inconvenience of this life, but the rich God in his goodnesse hath provided a suitable supply. Doth God take care for this fading perishing life, which is but as a vapor, and hath he good things for it, and fences from the ill and annoyances of it, till we have fulfilled our pilgrimage upon earth: and will not that God have a care of our best life of grace that shall end in glory, that we shall have all things necessary for life and godlinesse, which hath the promise not of this life onely, but of a better: he that is so good to this naturall life, will be much more in things concerning a better life, which he would have us mind more, *I will be as a greene fir tree unto him.*

2 Pet. 1. 3.

God will be as a *fir tree* especially in regard of shadow, to keepe from all annoyance both of storme and of the Sunne, for the Sunne in those hot countries annoyes them very much, as the Spouse complaines of her blacknesse, *because the Sunne had shined upon her*, to be *blacke as the tents of Kedar*, &c. Whence we may observe by the way,

Cant. 1. 5.

Observ. *There is not the most comfortable refreshing creature in the world, but take it in the excesse, it harmes and annoyes.*

What

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What more comfortable then water, yet if it prevaile and abound, it is a destroying creature, as we see in the deluge and divers inundations? what more comfortable then fire? and what more terrible if it exceed? what more cherishing, refreshing and quickning then the Sunne, yet in the excessive heate thereof it scorcheth and parcheth things? So in the Sunne of prosperity and all other good things in the world, it is best to have and enjoy all things with moderation: for if we have grace to qualifie them, all things are good: otherwise the excesse hurts us. Therefore beg of God wisdome to temper and moderate the best good in this world, which otherwise hurts us. For even the excessive heate of the Sunne in those countries, makes them glad of the shadow of the *fire-tree*.

Thus God doth not onely give a shadow, but a comfortable shadow and defence to his people, which is therefore called *the shadow of his wings*. How oft (saith Christ to *Jerusalem*) *would I have gathered thee as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings*? Mat. 23. 37. It is not only a shielding from hurts and dangers, and stormes, but a sweet defence with rest and quiet: as those that are weary compose themselves to rest under a shadow, so in God is our rest: *Come unto me* (saith Christ) *all ye that are weary and heavie laden, and ye shall finde rest to your soules*. Mat. 11. 28. All rest is in Christ and in Gods mercy in Christ. We see then after wee have forsooke Idolatry

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God is to us instead of all the good wee had by Idols, we loose nothing by it, *God will bee as a greene firre-tree*: whence the point is,

Observ. *There is a protection, rest, and defence provided for Gods people, when once they have renounced their Idolatry and sinnefull courses.*

Those who refuse the shelter of Idols, God will be a shelter unto them, *a greene firre-tree unto them*, another manner of shelter, then that which Idols or any other creature can give them. Every man will have some shelter, shield or other to cover him, this or that great man to sheild or shelter himselfe under. A rich man he hath riches, another this or that defence, every man that hath any wit about him, will have some shelter, and not lye open to all stormes when they come. But the onely true shelter is God himselfe to a Christian: all other refuges are but shadowes, that is they are nothing but like *Ionas gourd*, which may shelter for a time, but there is a worme of vanity that will eate them out. Riches and the favour of men may shelter for a time, but there is a worme at the bottome which will roote them out, death will consume them, and those they depend upon: but God is a true shelter to his people, an everlasting habitation, as it is written: *Thou art our habitation from generation to generation*; we dwell in him as in our *Rocke* and *Castle*, hee is an everlasting habitation, not onely a shadow, but a tower and a castle to dwell in. Therefore the onely wise man is the

Psal. 90 1.

Christian:

Chriſtian: For as *Noah* when the flood came upon the old world and ſwept them away, had an Arke to ſave himſelfe in, ſo have all Gods children a houſe to get over their heads in the worſt times, which is Gods bleſſed protection, in whom they are ſafe. Let us thinke often of theſe things, what a bleſſed thing it is to bee in the ſtate of a Chriſtian, that hath alway a certaine and ſure protection quiet and reſt in God. And what a fearefull thing is it to bee as the *Achitophels* of this world, to be as *Caine, Iudas or Saul?* who are ſhrewd in counſell and pollicy, and yet when conſcience is awakened by the ſtorme of Gods wrath, want a ſhelter, whilſt he who is above conſcience, and ſhould be a ſhelter to them frownes upon them: what a pittifull ſtate is this? the wickedeſt man in the world, though he have never ſo great dependance, parts, and ſtrength from humane helps, yet when the ſtorme of Gods wrath comes, he is as a naked man in the midſt of a ſtorme, and knowes not whether to goe: therefore let us be wiſe to have God for our ſhelter, if we would not be like theſe miſerable politicians and worldlings.

Now from this that the ſhadow is comfortable in thoſe hot countryes, where the Sunne is directly over their heads, comes theſe ſweet phraſes in the *Pſalmes*, and other Scriptures. *Thou ſhalt keepe me under the ſhadow of thy wings: as the apple-tree amongſt the trees of the forreſt, ſo is my beloved amongſt the ſonnes. I ſate downe* Cant. 2. 3.

under his shadow with great delight, &c. The Church speakes of Christ, *I sate under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.* The like you have in many places in the *Psalmes*. I will name one or two more pregnant then the rest, to helpe our memories, and to breed a deeper impression of so comfortable a point. *Psal.* 63. There the *Psalmist* speakes of resting under the shadow of Gods wings. And so in that other sweet and excellent *Psalme*, in the greatest extreamities of Gods people, *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High*, that is God, *shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.* He sayes after, *I will say of the Lord hee is my refuge and fortresse*, for where God is a man that he is a hiding place and a shadow, there Faith adds the application presently, and then he goes on speaking of himselfe, *He shall cover me with his feathers under his wings will I rest, his truth shall be my buckler, thou shalt not bee afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow by day, nor of the pestilence that walketh in the darke; a thousand shall fall*, &c. So that we see how God doth that to our soules and conditions, that the firre-tree, which is Gods good creature, doth to the body in the time of stormes and heate; that is hee doth refresh us under the shadow of his wings, hee is a sweet, comfortable and gratious God unto us. This you see is a cleere truth, yet because it is so comfortable wee will inlarge it further: looke what

Psal. 91. 1.

God

God ſpeakes *Iſa.*4.45. *The Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her aſſembly a cloud and ſmoake by day, and the ſhining of a flame of fire by night, for upon all the glory ſhall be a defence.* See what a comfortable ſhadow God is, he ſaith, *he will create*, if they want the comfort of the *firre-tree* and ſuch like ſhadowes, he ſayes *God will create*, that is make them of nothing, hee will *create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion*, where his children dwell, and upon their aſſemblies, *a cloud and a ſmoake by day*, that is, when they are annoyed by the Sunne, God will create a cloude to keep the rage and the ſcorching heate of the Sunne from them, and then, *a ſhining flame of fire by night*, becauſe in the night wee need light, for *upon all the glory ſhall be a defence*, that is upon all the glorious Saints of God, they are *Glory*, for there is a Spirit of glory put into them. The people of God in whom God will glorifie himſelfe, are glorious, and ſhall bee further glorified, and they ſhall in the meane time, have a defence by day and by night from all dangers whatſoever. 1 Pet.4.14.

Thus it is cleare, that God will be *a ſhadow* to his people, as the *fir-trees* which is an alluſion to that grand paſſage of his providence in conducting the children of *Iſrael* out of *Ægypt* where (God to guide them) provided *a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night*, the ſame *pillar* which was lightſome to the *Iſralites* was darke to the *Ægyptians*, which cloud and pillar of fire con- Exo.14.20.

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tinued, (God conducting them) till they came into the land of *Canaan*. Hee ſhadowed them by day with a cloud and lightned and heated them by a pillar of fire at night, thus conducting them till they came to *Canaan*. So we paſſing through the wilderneſſe of this world till wee come unto our celeſtiall *Canaan* Heaven, God will be a *cloude* by his gratious ſpeciall providence, to keepe all ill whatſoever from us, and *a pillar of fire* to lighten and direct us till wee come to our heavenly *Canaan*, where he will be all in all, when we ſhall need neither Sunne nor Moone, nor have any thing to annoy us. There the noone-day ſhall not burne us with heate of the Sunne, nor the fire by night, when we are in Heaven there ſhall be no annoyance of the creature: there ſhall be no more want of light becauſe we ſhal have al light & refreſhing there for ever and ever. For as it is written, then *all teares*, all ſorrow and cauſe of ſorrow ſhal be for ever wiped away, an alluſion whereunto we have comfortably ſet downe *Pſal.* 121. The more we ſhal inrich & refreſh our memories with thinking of theſe things, the more comfort will ſink into our hearts. The 121. *Pſal.* is all ſpent on comfort in this kinde. *I will lift up mine eyes to the hils whence commeth my ſalvation: my helpe commeth from the Lord who made Heaven and Earth*, all my helpe is from him, *hee will not ſuffer my foote to be moved, he that keepes Iſrael will neither ſlumber nor ſleepe. He will not ſlumber*, that is, his *eyes* are alwayes open to ſee, as his

Revr. 7. 16.

Pſal. 121.

eares

eares to heare. *Behold he that keepeth Iſraell doth neither ſlumber nor ſleepe, the Lord is thy keeper, thy ſhadow, ſo that the ſunne ſhall not ſmite thee by day, nor the moone by night, the Lord ſhall preſerve thy going out and thy comming in, from this time for ever.* Thus we ſee this Scripture is a large gloſſe and commentary upon this truth, that God with a ſpeciall providence and protection cares for his children to keepe them from all ill: he will be as the *ſirve tree* to them in regard of ſhadow; Whence we obſerve in ſpeciall,

That this life of ours whilſt we come to Heaven is ſubject to ſcorchings and many annoyances, and thoſe both outwardly and inwardly, from our ſelves, and from others. Obſerv.

Friſt for *outward annoyances*, how many of them is our poore life ſubject unto? and for inward terror and boyling heate of conſcience, when God in anger diſcovers himſelfe unto us, and ſets our ſinnes in order before us: O then, if wee have not a ſhadow; if God in mercy through Jeſus Chriſt be not a ſhadow to keepe that boiling heate from us, what will become of the poore conſcience? eſpecially if Satan adds his poiſoned fierie darts, poiſoning, inflaming the conſcience with remptations to deſpaire, as if God had forſaken and were angry, or when God ſeemes angry, then hee ſeemes like a conſuming fire. O! who can abide it, when all theſe fiery temptations are joyned with Gods anger? yet the deareſt of Gods Saints are ſubject to theſe inward boiling heats

Pſal. 50. 21.

of Gods anger. *My God my God why hast thou forsaken mee*, said the head of the Church himselfe, and see how *Iob* complaines, *thou hast set me as a But to shoot at*. And in regard of this spirituall diserti*o*n *David* complaines much throughout the *Psalmes*. So this our life is subject to outward and spirituall annoyances, from God, from Satan, and from our selves and the world every way annoyed with scorchings and heate, what need a shadow, a protection, a defence else. That supposeth this.

Mat. 27. 46.

Iob 16. 12.

Their misery who have not God for a shadow is shewed.

If this be so then consider how fearefull the condition of those people is that are not under the shadow of the Almighty, who have not God as a *firre-tree* to shadow and cover them, that he is not a cloud by day too, and a pillar of fire by night, that have not him for a hiding place to spread the wings of his mercy over them. What is the state of such people? Surely howsoever God feed them, and fills their bellie with good things in this world for a time, yet their case will be fearefull, when God lets loose conscience and Sathans fiery darts against them. Judge then hereby what our state is by nature without God. The same sunne which cherisheth and comforteth, also tortures and scorches us: so God is a sunne, a quickning sunne to his children, yea a vigorous sunne, who hath healing under his wings; but to the wicked he is a scorching and a consuming fire, it is a fearfull thing to fall into the hands of the living God who is so dreadfull:

Mal. 4 2.

Heb. 12. 29.

he

he will not be a ſhadow to the wicked in an excellent manner, he indeed permits them to have many ſhaddowes in this world, many ſweet comforts, and keepes them alſo from many dangers, but they have not that worthy portion which *Hannah* had from her Husband, Love at the houre of death, and in time of temptation, when theſe comforts leave them, what ſhadow have they then? none at all; but are as naked men in a ſtorme, ſubject to the fury of Gods eternall wrath. The things which are moſt comfortable to Gods people are moſt terrible to them, as it is ſaid in one of thoſe plagues powred out upon Antichriſt (for all the vialls there ſpoken of tend to the puniſhing of *Antichriſt*,) there is a violl powred forth upon the Sunne, which reflecting and lighting upon them, cauſeth them to blaſpheme, they were ſo ſcorched with it. *The Sunne* by probable interpreters, is ſaid to be the Word of God, which when it is opened is ſweet and comfortable to Gods people, but ſhining upon men that are naught, eſpecially at the howre of death, in affliction and in diſtreſſe it ſpeakes no comfort to them, but cauſeth them to deſpaire, rage and ſtorme. Nay prophane men when they are at the beſt, they rage and ſtorme at the direction of the ſunne, becauſe it diſcovers to them that which they would not have knowne. Reve. 6.

Now what Uſe ſhould we make of this? will God be a ſhadow to his people to keepe them *Uſe.* 3.

them from all evill, as his promiſe was to *Abraham* in the covenant of grace: *I will be thy buckler* to keepe ill from thee; and *thy exceeding great reward.* And in the *Pſalmes*, God promiſeth to be a *Sunne* for good, and a *ſhield* to keepe off all ill. Will God beſtow good and keepe off ill from us? then labour to come willingly under the ſhadow of the Almighty, to ſerve him, and to make God in covenant our God, that he may be a *ſhield and a hiding place* unto us, and a *ſhadow* in all extremities whatſoever. Thoſe that attend upon great perſons, they doe it upon this hope: O! if I belong to ſuch a great perſon, hee will ſhelter me, that every baſe perſon ſhall not wrong me; I ſhall now have ſome prerogatives. Doth carnall pollicie teach poore creatures who are ſubject to abuſe it, to get ſome ſhelter of great noble Men to be priviledged, and ſhall not ſpirituall wiſdome teach us to get under the great God, under the ſhadow of his wings? none can come neere to annoy us without his ſpeciall will and leave, as in the ſtorie of *Iob*, The Divell durſt not annoy him, nor enter into the Swine, much leſſe hurt Gods children, ſhall we not therefore get under the ſervice of our God, can any man ſhelter us better? there is no ſervice to that of a King, but is there any ſervice to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords? will he ſuffer his children to be abuſed in his owne ſight, or his followers diſgraced? ſurely no, therefore make this uſe of it, to get into the ſervice of

Gen. 15. 1.
Pſal 84. 11.
Job. 1.
Mat 8. 31.

the

the great God, which is a rich, secure, and safe service.

Againe, it yeelds us an use of Resolution, for to obey God, and to goe boldly on in a good course, what should we feare when God is our master? he will shield us and keepe us safe, and give his Angels charge over us, to shew that he hath a care over us, indeed he hath many keepers under him, but he is the grand keeper, who sets all a worke: for Angels, Magistrates, Ministers, and our friends keepe us: but Gods Spirit within us, and his gratious good providence without us are our chiefe keepers. Therefore let all our care be to serve God, and to be in his wayes, he will keep us in his wayes, what an incouragement is this to bee in good courses, where we may looke for the shadow of the Almighty God without tempting of him. If a man be in an ill way and course, hee cannot looke that the Almighty should shadow him: his heart will tell him, now God may withdraw his shelter and wing from me, hee may leave me naked to the Divell and to the malice of men, he may strip me of all comfort in my soule and conscience, and give me up to terrors of heart out of his way. If I trust him now I tempt him, because he will be a defence onely in his owne wayes. Therefore let us labour alwayes to bee in those wayes; and then God will bee as *a greene firre-tree* unto us. *Vse.2.*

And last of all, let it bee an use of Comfort unto *Vse.3.*

unto us, for all the time of our life to come: whatſoever may come, wee yet paſſe under a buckler, let a whole ſhowre and ſhot of arrowes fall upon us, we have a buckler, *Thou Lord art my Buckler, thou Lord art my defence, my hiding place, my caſtle:* we are ſubject to a world of dangers whilſt we live heere. But wee have God inſtead of all, to keepe of all, he is a Buckler, a Shield, a Shadow and a Hiding place, let what ill ſo ever bee preſented to our thoughts there is in God ſome fence againſt it. For this purpoſe we have many excellent paſſages in *Pſa.* 18. which vvas made after a great deliverance. *I love the Lord my buckler, my ſhield, my defence,* as if he ſhould ſay, I have in my life time been annoyed with many troubles, but I have found experience of God in all. *He is my buckler, my ſhield, my fence,* every thing to me. So let us comfort our ſelves in this, let come what vvill come, all ſhall come vvell to Gods children; he vvill keepe them, if not outvvardly, yet in that they moſt deſire to be kept in, he vvill *preſerve their ſpirits from every evill worke,* from doing ill, and from deſperate falling from God; and he vvill guard them invvardly *by the peace of God which paſſeth underſtanding*; it ſhall guard their hearts, they ſhall have invvard peace in the midſt of all the troubles of this vvorld: a great comfort. What a rejoycing is it to a poore paſſenger, vvhen he paſſeth by the high vvay ſide in a hot burning day, or in a ſtorme, to ſee a goodly high tree with ſpreading boughes,

Pſal. 18. 1.

that

that he may hide and repoſe himſelfe under it from the ſtorme or heate, this pleaſeth him marvellouſly, as *Ionas* gourd did him. Doe theſe outward poore contentments ſo refreſh us in this world, and ſhall wee not thinke that God which provides ſuch poore contentments for this ſorry life in this world, will he not provide a ſhadow in regard of the maine dangers, ſurely he will if we truſt him, and ſhew our truſt by caſting our ſelves upon him in obedience ſuitable to our calling, (ſaith the Apoſtle) *I am perſwaded that neither things preſent, nor to come, nor life, nor death, nor any thing ſhall be able to ſeperate us from the love of Chriſt Ieſus our Lord.* Rom. 8. 38, 39

Therefore let us be afraid of nothing that can befall us, God will be a ſhield and a buckler, and will do all to us in a good way. Wee have aboundance of comfort every where in Scripture, and want nothing but Faith to apply it home in practiſe. Therefore we ought to beg of God ſo to inlarge our Faith, that as his promiſes and comforts are very large, ſo may our veſſels be to retaine all theſe excellent comforts and ſweet promiſes.

All other comforts in the world, are but like *Ionas* gourd, for all other ſhadowes yeeld onely a ſhadow for a while, and then the Sunne-ſhine or Eaſt-winde is like a worme to nip them a ſunder. Never truſt then, or leane to ſuch ſhadowes as theſe bee, of Friends, Riches, &c. Which are ſhadowes men ordinarily roly upon. I have ſuch and ſuch a friend, a place

and

and the like, my mountaine is thus and thus strong: all these are *Ionas* gourds, there is a worme of vanity will be at the roote of all and consume all, all other shadowes are but meere shadowes. What is more transient then a shadow, but Gods shadow is like a greene *firre tree*, it never failes nor forsakes us, as all other shadowes and contentments doe whatsoever: but God saith he *will be like a greene firre tree unto thee*, yet this is not all, nor enough, for after this he adds,

From mee is thy fruit found.

God is not onely to his children a *Firre tree* in regard of shadow, that tree abounding in leaves very thicke, whereby we are kept from annoyance of scorching heats of troubles and terrors of conscience, and persecution, &c. This is not all, but he saith also,

From mee is thy fruit found.

A *Firre tree* though it be for thicknesse of the leaves a very good shade, yet it is a barren fruitlesse tree, but God is such a tree as hath both shadow and fruit, in God there is a supply of all wants whatsoever. All the scattered excellencies of all creatures being united in God, and eminent in him, it is in him, and in him in a divine gratious eminent and comfortable manner. All the creatures as they come from God, are his creatures, neither is there any creature but hath somewhat of God in it. Therefore God vouchsafes to take Names from the creatures, to be a Rocke of salvation, he is as a

rocke

rocke to build on, to be a ſhadowing tree, becauſe he is a defence from ill, and to be a fruitfull tree, becauſe he yeelds good and comfort and grace as he doth fruit. When we ſee any thing that is uſefull, we may ſay this we have from God in an eminent manner, this preſervation and comfort. Doe I in my paſſage to Heaven finde ſuch comfort in the creature? when I am paſſing through a wilde place, have I ſuch comfort in the ſhadow of a tree? or when I am hungry am I ſo refreſhed by a fruitfull tree? what comfort then is there in God, in Heaven, in glory, when there are ſuch comforts in the way of my pilgrimage in this world, therefore God is ſaid here both to be a *firee tree*, and a fruitfull tree. For then the paſſenger travelling through a wild barren place, thinkes himſelfe made, when he can retire from the ſcorching of the heat, and alſo therewithall find fruitfullneſſe; ſhade and fruit concurring, hee thinkes himſelfe marvellouſly happy. This is the ſtate of a Chriſtian that hath God for his God, being in covenant with him, he is not onely a ſtrong protection and defence from all annoyance (as God ſhadowes us and is a Buckler from all evills both inward and outward, from Sathan and all kindes of evills and wrath) but he is alſo a fruitfull tree too, *From mee is thy fruit found.*

The end of the twelfth Sermon.

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THE THIRTEENTH SERMON.

Hos. 14. 9.

-----I am like a greene firre tree, from me is thy fruit found.

THIS holy Prophet, as wee heard heretofore, did prophecie more then sixtie yeares among the tenne Tribes, even untill the time immediately preceding their captivity and misery, in like manner as *Ieremy* and *Ezekiel* did to the other Jewes. Now becauſe in the worſt times God alwayes had a remnant, and yet hath: therefore it is the Prophets care in

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this Chapter which we have gone over, to inſtruct them in divers particulars of Reformation, as we have heard at large: *To returne to the Lord, to take words to themſelves:* which *words* (as we have heard) are alſo taught them: backt with many ſweet promiſes and incouragements, in Gods anſwer to their petitions. The laſt whereof inſiſted and ſtood upon was this, that God promiſeth to be like *a greene firre-tree* unto *Ephraim* (who perſonated all the ten Tribes) *Ephraim* thought before to ſhadow and fence himſelfe by Idols, and league with other Idolatrous Nations, which were like *Ionas* rotten gourd unto them, poore ſhadows and defences, (but ſaith God) *I will bee a firre-tree* for ſhadow to *Ephraim*, to defend him from all dangers whatſoever, and then in the next place he ads

From me is thy fruit found.

A *firre-tree*, is a greene tree, but it hath no fruit, the excellencies of the creatures are applyed to God but not the defects. Therefore when compariſons are taken from the creatures and given to God, we muſt alway except the defects, ſupplying the ſame by ſome other cleering compariſon. So God is not onely *a firre-tree* for ſhelter and defence, but he is a fruitfull tree, ſo a *firre tree* is not, and therefore without compariſon. God hath more in him then any creature hath. For all that excellency which is in all the creatures is in him, and that in a farre more eminent manner: therefore hee is both

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a ſhelter and fruit. If a paſſenger in diſtreſſe have not onely a *firre tree* to ſhelter him and ſhadow him, but a fruit tree alſo to feed him, he thinkes he is made, when God thus comforts him. So a Chriſtian he hath not onely ſhelter from the wrath of God; but hee hath alſo a place of reſt and quiet, the mercy of God to keepe him, and the Word and Sacraments to feed him. God is a fruit tree, as well as a *firre tree.*

From mee is thy fruit found.

That is, whatſoever is gratiouſly or comfortably good to us, in us, or iſſues from us, is all from God; hence firſt of all we obſerve for our inſtruction,

From a mans ſelfe comes nothing that is gratiouſly good. Obſerv.

Whatſoever is ſavingly good is altogether from God, *without mee* (ſaith Chriſt) *you can doe nothing:* S. *Paul* was wondrous charie of this point, 1 *Cor.*15.10. he ſaith, *he laboured more abundantly then they all: yet not I,* (he recalls himſelfe) *but the grace of God in him that did all:* and of my ſelfe, as of my ſelfe, I cannot ſo much *as thinke a good thought.* It is from God that we have meanes to make us fruitfull, and from the gratious working of his Spirit comes it that they are effectuall; that we think a good thought, or open our mouthes to ſpeake a good word, it is from Gods Spirit inabling us thereto. *Open thou my mouth* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *and my lips ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe.* We Joh.15.5.

are toung-tyed, and our lips sealed unlesse God open them, we cannot speake one savoury seasonable word to further our accompt; we may speake empty words, but never a word comes from the heart that is gratious and good, but it must be by the Spirit of God. It is he who workes all our workes in us and for us. *He begins the good worke in us, and perfects it to the day of the Lord*, the truth of this is wondrous cleere.

Isa. 26 12. Phil. 1. 6.

If this be so, then undoubtedly the differences in the graces of men it is from another; meerely from God, and Gods Spirit. There is indeed difference in men, but this is originally fetched from the grace of Gods Spirit. The good use of freedome that we talke so much of, it is from God, as well as the indowments of it. Wee have free will, but the use of it is not in our power, to use this or that at our pleasure: for, *It is God which gives the will and the deed*, of his good pleasure. Not onely the deed, but the will too, we should make the will an Idoll else. For so many wills so many Idols, if we thinke one man in himselfe can difference himselfe by his will.

Phil. 2. 13.

Againe in that God saith, *from me is thy fruit found*: we may learne henee,

Observ. *That fruit that is gratious comes from us and from God too.*

It is our fruit and Gods: so that there is a subordination of gratious workes under God: the fruit we have is from God, yet it is our fruit too. How can this be? Yes easily, we speake

Quest. *Sol.*

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the words, but it is God that opens our lips. We beleeve, but it is God that gives us grace to beleeve. We doe the action, but God gives us grace to do it. God opened the heart of *Lydia* to beleeve, ſo that God and we meete together in the ſame action. We have parts, underſtanding, will, affections, bodies and ſoules, therefore the actions are ſaid to be ours, becauſe God workes in us as underſtanding creatures, but God ſets the wheele a going, ſo that the actions are originally his, and ours ſubordinately under him. *From mee is thy fruit found.* Acts. 16. 14.

If ſo be that God and man joyne in one action, *From mee is thy fruit found*, as though he ſhould ſay, whatſoever thou haſt or ſayeſt that is good, it is from me; here we ſee how and why good workes cannot merit, though they come from God, as all goodneſſe doth; yet in regard they come from us too, we add ſome tainture thereunto from our corrupt nature. What God and Chriſt himſelfe doth is abſolute and perfect, as Juſtification: but what fruit he workes in us, there is ſomewhat of the old *Adam* in us, which taints the beauty of the worke: it is Gods fruit comming from him, and yet our fruit alſo comming from us: which being ſo much tainted ſhould humble us, in that we adde nothing to the truth of Gods worke in us, but abaſement and defilement by our corruptions: *From mee* (ſaith God) *is thy fruit found*, ſo much as is ſupernaturally good: but becauſe our nature is not altered on the ſuddaine but ſtill *Why good works cannot merit.*

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1 Cor. 5. 7.

taſts of the *old leaven*, therefore there can be no meriting of Salvation by any workes we doe, becauſe they are not perfectly good.

Vſe. 1. *For Humiliation.*

The cleering of theſe points in our judgement, they ſerve to worke in us a deepe Humiliation, ſeeing that we have nothing in our ſelves but ſtaines and defilements, all that is good in us comming from God. *From me is thy fruite found.* What is from our ſelves then, if all good in us comes from God? vve are a barren and a curſed ſoyle, nothing that is good can come from us, even as the Earth vvas curſed after *Adams* fall, and brought forth nothing but briers and thornes, ſo our ſoule naturally is a curſed ſoyle in it ſelfe, and brings forth nothing but weeds and thornes. Our hearts are like the barren wilderneſſe, full of evill noyſome luſts and affections. Therefore this ſerves to abaſe us, that we be not lifted up vvith any good in us, for as that is altogether from Gods Spirit, ſo likewiſe we of our ſelves add nothing to it but ſomewhat which may deminiſh the value thereof.

Vſe. 2. *For Information of judgement.* I.

Heere againe for matter of judgement, you have a difference betweene the ſtate of nature, and the ſtate of grace, I meane of innocent nature, for in *Adam* wee had a ſtanding in our ſelves, being truſted with our owne good, but now under the ſecond Covenant, under the ſecond *Adam*, Chriſt Jeſus, we have many graces to fit us for Heaven, and many good works we doe, but all the fruit wee have and

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yeeld is from God. So that now this is a grand difference, *Adam* as it were had the keeping of his owne happineſſe locked up in himſelfe, but we have our happineſſe, graces, and whatſoever is good for us ſhut up in Chriſt, as the Spring and Fountaine, which is the reaſon of the perpetuall ſtability and permanent condition of Gods children, once his and ever his. And put the caſe we want this or that helpe, yet this prejudiceth not the perpetuity of the condition of Gods children, becauſe thoſe graces which come immediately from Gods Spirit, may be conveyed ſometimes without meanes, as well as with them. Therefore whatſoever decay is in the branches that are grafted into this noble Vine Chriſt Jeſus, in whom we bare all the fruit we beare; yet notwithſtanding there is life everlaſting for us in the roote, which is by little and little diſtilled into us. The leaves may fall, outward things may decay, but there is life alway in the roote of a Chriſtian, becauſe he is in Chriſt, and hath his fruit from him: he cannot want fruit, no more then Chriſt can want influence and vigor. Which ſhewes us the excellent ſtate of a Chriſtian under the new Covenant of grace, that now we fetch all out of our ſelves, and it is happy for us that we doe ſo. For without Chriſt wee can doe nothing, as without the ſoule the body can doe nothing, ſo without the Spirit of Chriſt, we can doe nothing, from him is all. This is the reaſon why we muſt not truſt to any grace in our ſelves

Iohn. 15. 5.

that comes from us, becauſe grace comes from God in Chriſt, truſt God the Spring whence it comes, whoſe the fruit is, God the Father in Chriſt, from whom all fulneſſe comes, and is derived unto us: or elſe wee make but an Idoll of grace, if we truſt too much to grace, looke to the Spring whence all comes to us: *From me is thy fruit found.*

Queſt. Againe, for further inſtruction; What is the Reaſon that ſome have more grace then others, and more comfort, ſome having grace and comfort in one degree, and ſome in an other.

Sol. Hence it is, from me is thy fruit found: it comes from the freedome of God in Chriſt, who according to his good pleaſure gives the will and the deed, whence we have grace ſometimes in the vigour, ſometimes in a weaker and leſſer degree, the fault being in our ſelves too. Yet notwithſtanding there is a liberty in the Spirit of Chriſt, to give a more or leſſe meaſure of grace, to ſhew that our good we doe ſprings not from our ſelves. Which alſo is the reaſon of the difference betwixt Chriſtians, becauſe God will ſhew that he is the diſpoſer and the diſpencer of his owne graces and comforts. And that is the reaſon alſo why we muſt performe this duty of waiting upon God in the uſe of meanes, though we finde no ſenſe of grace, and comfort from him for the preſent, *From him our fruit is found.* Waite his leiſure, he ſuſpends grace and comfort untill a fit time,

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in regard of the degree: but yet there is alway ſome grace left, though hee ſuſpends the increaſe thereof untill a fit time, becauſe hee would have us know that it is of his giving. Chriſtians who are acquainted herewith, they will not tie God to their time, but humbly goe on in the uſe of meanes, who though they finde not their ſpirits and their comforts enlarged ſo as at other times, nor ſo great, nor as other folkes are, yet can ſay, Lord thou giveſt the Will and the Deed according to thy good pleaſure, all comes from thee, therefore I will uſe the meanes and depend upon thee, becauſe I have all from thee freely. God gives a ſpirit of Prayer, and then the thing we pray for, all is from him, *From me is thy fruit found.* Doe we finde the Ordinances fruitfull, the preaching of the Word to open our underſtandings, to kindle our affections, to inlighten our judgements, it is the Spirit of God that joynes with the meanes, that are dead of themſelves, to make them fruitfull: what are the Ordinances without God, but empty conduit pipes of themſelves? therefore, *From me is thy fruite found.*

This ſhould teach and direct us alſo in all things to looke up to God in all uſe of meanes, Lord I may reade, heare, and uſe helps and meanes long enough to little or no purpoſe, unleſſe thou give a bleſſing, *Paul* may plant and *Apollo* may water, but if thou give not fruite from Heaven, all is to no purpoſe. Wee forget *Vſe.3.* 1 Cor.3.6.

get this, and therefore proſper accordingly. We thinke we can worke fruit out of the meanes by our owne wit, Oh! It is not ſo, whatſoever is comfortable or gratious in the uſe of meanes, it is meerely by Gods bleſſing. And therefore ſeeing all our fruit whatſoever that is good comes from God, let it ſtirre us up to practiſe the ſpirituall worſhip of God, to adore God, to beg of his fulneſſe in Chriſt Jeſus: and likewiſe to reſigne our ſelves in all conditions unto him, Lord I put my ſelfe upon thee, all my fruit is from thee, thou canſt ſanctifie any condition unto me. This adoration and reſignation, are parts of the ſpirituall worſhip of God. And likewiſe the ſervice of the Lord in feare and reverence, that inward ſervice of the Spirit, all depends upon this, that all our fruit is from God: therefore I muſt ſerve him, and ſerve him as he muſt be ſerved in Spirit and Truth. What makes a man reverence another? I depend upon him, without him I ſinke, will this make a man ſerve man? and will it not make us ſerve God, and ſerve him with feare? what breeds an awfull feare? this that if he withdraw his influence, I fall into ſinne, deſpaire, and diſcomfort: ſo that the ground of all feare of God, and ſervice ſpringing from this feare, it is from hence, that from him all my fruit, all my grace, and comfort is found, therefore I muſt have grace to ſerve him, as a God in feare. For if the ſoule be not poſſeſt and ſeaſoned with this heavenly doctrine, that all comes from him, then

Ioh. 4. 24.

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surely where is Gods service? what becomes of it? where is that adoration, and magnifying of God in our hearts? where's that putting off our selves upon him in all condions? *Vse.4.*

Againe this inforceth another part of Gods spirituall and heavenly worship, cleaving to God in our affections, especially these two, in our Faith and Love, that as all comes from and by Christ Jesus, so thereby we may draw from him the fruit of grace and comfort. So that this spiritual cleaving and uniting of our soules to Christ, it comes from this that I have all from him, therefore I must cleave to him, seeing whatsoever is spirituall, holy, and comfortable I must have from him. Therefore if we would worship God in Spirit and Truth, as we should doe, and set him up in his due place in the soule, let us labour to have our judgements sanctified in this, that all comes from God. If we were surely grounded in the Goodnesse, Mercy, and Riches of Gods grace, and knew that all our fruit comes and is from him, this would make us to conclude, that therefore it is reason that we should worship him and depend upon him strictly. As the Prophet speakes of Idols, that they can neither doe us good nor harme, inforcing that they should not feare them, so wee may say of all other things distinct from God, they can neither doe good nor harme, except God inable them. Will you be slaves to men, they cannot doe good nor harme, but as God Ier. 10.5.

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uſes them whoſe creatures they are. Therefore the worſhip of God is alſo founded hence; that God does all good or harme; if men doe it, they doe it from him, he gives them leave, as it is ſaid of *Shimei*, God bid him raile on *David*. If they doe us good, they are his conduits, whereby he deriveth good to us: therefore all is from him: we ſee then how all the true and hearty worſhip of God comes from this; *From mee is thy fruit found.*

2 Sam. 16. 10.

Vſe. 5. This ſhould make us likewiſe as to worſhip God in ſpirit and in truth; ſo to be reſolute in good cauſes whatſoever come of it, looke for a ground and then be reſolute: becauſe all comes from God, who will ſtand by us in his owne cauſe and quarrell.

But if I forſake this and that ſupport, I ſhall lay open my ſelfe to injuryes and wrongs.

Marke what the Spirit of God ſaith: *Ye that love the Lord hate that which is evill.* But if I hate that which is evill, Idols, *&c.* As *Ephraim* here doth, I ſhall be deſpiſed and trampled upon. No, (ſaith he) *God preſerves the ſoules of his, hee will be a ſhield and a buckler: a Sunne and a ſhield, and no good thing ſhall be wanting to them that leade a godly life.* God will bea *Sunne* for all good, and a *ſhield* to keepe off all ill, therefore let us be reſolute in good cauſes; Whence comes all ſhifting, halting, imperfect walking, and inconſtancie in the wayes of God, but from this, that men know not where to have men: they are not grounded on this, that whatſoever

Pſal. 79. 10.

Pſal. 84.

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is fruitfull and good comes from God, who will give whatſoever is fruitfull and good in depending upon him. This made the three children in *Daniell* couragious, they knew they ſhould have fruit from God; that is, grace, comfort and peace, the beſt fruit of all. And therefore *know O King, that we will not worſhip thine Idoll, nor fall downe before it.* So holy *Heſter* being well grounded could ſay, *If I periſh I periſh:* I know the cauſe is good and if all helpe in the creature be remooved and taken away, yet I ſhall have fruit in God. Dan. 3. 18. Heſt. 4. 16.

Let us therefore carry this about us as a principle of holy life, to know that our good is hid up in God, and not in the creature; ſo that if all helpe were taken away, yet we have it immediately, purer and better in the fountaine. What if there were not a creature in the world to helpe me? what if all were againſt me? yet God may make all their powers and indeavours fruitfull. There is ſuch fruit from God, that he can make the worſt things which befalleth us fruitfull, when he pleaſeth; there is a bleſſing in curſes and croſſes, a good fruit in them: who can doe him harme that God turneth the bittereſt things he ſuffers to his good. Let none be daunted in a good cauſe, but goe on reſolutly, ſeeing God hath all in himſelfe. Was not *Moſes* forty dayes without any earthly comfort on the mount? and Chriſt alſo without naturall ſuſtentation ſo long? did not God give light without a Sunne in the firſt creation? we are tyed Exod. 34. 28. Mat. 4. 2.

tyed to meanes but he is not. We thinke if ſuch friends and helps be taken away, that then all is gone, but what were they? were not they meanes which God uſed at his good pleaſure, and cannot hee give comfort without them? yes certainely, the greateſt comfort and grace is oft-times given immediately from God, when he ſalutes the ſoule by his owne Spirit, as he did *Paul* and *Sylas* in the dungeon, who in the midſt of diſcomfort, had their ſpirit inlarged to ſing hymnes at mid-night: God reſerving that comfort for that time. Therefore ſeeing all comfort is from God, and hee is not tyed to this or that meanes, nay can bleſſe all contrary meanes, is not this a ground of Reſolution?

Act. 16. 25.

Vſe. 6. Of comfort.

Therefore now make a Uſe of Comfort of it, ſeeing all fruit is from God, who is in Covenant with his Children in Jeſus Chriſt, and who will improove all his attributes for their good, his Wiſdome, Goodneſſe, Power and Mercy, let them therefore take comfort to themſelves, that howſoever the world may take their friends from them, Riches, Liberty, and what you will: can they take God and fruit from them? No, *From me is thy fruit found.* If they could take away the Spirit of God, grace and comfort from us it were ſomething, but can they doe that? no, the worſt they can doe, is to ſend us to Heaven to the Fountaine of all grace and comfort: ſo that in this world they cannot caſt us into any condition wherein

wee cannot have communion with God, in whom all the ſcattered excellencies of the creature are gathered together meeting as it were in a center. It is hee that comforts us in our friends, that ſhewes bowels to us in our mothers, wiſdome and care towards us in our parents. The bowels of a mother, the care of a friend, the ſtrength of wiſe aſſiſtance, hath hee not all in himſelfe, if all be taken away? he hath all. Therefore let Chriſtians comfort themſelves that they can never be in a condition wherein fruit ſhall be taken from them. The poore worldling labours all his life for fruite, riches and friends, and when he dyes then his fruit faileth him and fals, his leafe withereth. What becommeth of his fruit then? he laboured for that which yeelds him nothing but vexation and death. But a Chriſtian doth otherwiſe, he labours for grace and comfort, to keepe his communion and peace with God, and when all is taken away, either by the injury and wrongs of men, or by the extreamity of the times, or as all will in the houre of death: his fruit is moſt after, in death and after death, more then can be by our narrow hearts conceived in the excellency thereof. O the excellent eſtate of a Chriſtian! imagine ſuch a one to have a tree that growes in Heaven, and ſends forth fruit and branches to him in whatſoever ſtate he is in. And ſo indeed God reacheth fruit from Heaven to the ſoule being in priſon and miſery. He reacheth from thence the fruit of grace, of

ſpirituall

ſpirituall ſtrength and comfort, a bleſſed eſtate. Therefore let Chriſtians comfort themſelves in their condition, *that all their fruit is from him:* and that God eſpecially will then ſhew himſelfe aboundant, when they ſtand moſt in need of him. Other trees beare no fruit in winter and in ſtormes, but God giveth fruit moſt in the worſt times. He is a God that comforteth the abject. As it is 2. *Cor.* 7. and here it is ſaid, that *in him the fatherleſſe findeth Mercy:* we have moſt fruit from him in the worſt times, then eſpecially he delighteth to ſhew himſelfe a God, when no comfort can be had from the creature.

Againſt future feares.

Therefore doe not deſpaire, but lay up this againſt evill times, never feare for the time to come. Let the mountaines be caſt into the midſt of the Sea, and let the Earth and all rage, as the Pſalmiſt ſayes, and let things runne upon a head, come what can come, God is where he was, and Gods children are where they were, in regard of the maine comfort. They cannot be in ſuch a condition, as that they can be deprived of their God, and of his aſſiſtance, *From me is thy fruit found.* Therefore care not for any condition that thou art in, this or that, thou ſhalt have that condition which ſhall be comfortable to thee: though many like beaſts goe on, and looke for no fruit from God.

Pſal. 46. 2.

Vſe. 7.

And let this alſo be an Incouragement to walke with God ſincerely and uprightly in all times

times, not fearing any creature, or danger from the creature, becauſe our fruit is from God. What if we looſe this or that, we know what was ſaid to *Amaziah* by the Prophet: but what ſhall become of the hundred talents, ſaith he, God is able to give thee much more, ſo in the loſſe of friends, having this and that tooke from us, let us comfort our ſelves, I but God is not taken from us. He who derives comfort by this or that friend, can ſupply it better by his owne Spirit. And whatſoever we part with in a good cauſe, let us remember what Chriſt ſaith: *Hee that parts with father or mother, with houſe or land for my ſake, ſhall have a hundred fold in this world, and afterwards life everlaſting.* He ſhall have all made up in grace, which is a hundred times better then any thing that is here, he ſhall have contentment which is better then the things themſelves: ſometimes he ſhall miſſing one worldly comfort, have more friends ſtirred up, but howſoever in want of one, he ſhall be ſupplied in an other comfort that he never dreamt of in this world. So that God is abundant to them that ſticke cloſe to him in ſincerity, hee ſhall finde him abundant in the things of this life, in one comfort or other.

2 Chro. 25. 9.

Mat. 19. 29.

Exhortation.

Therefore by theſe mercies of God here mentioned, let us be intreated to be in love with the condition of a Chriſtian life; and ſay as *Ephraim* here, what have I any more to doe with my former corrupt courſes, or Idols? give a peremptory anſwer to all ſinnefull courſes and

ſuggeſtions, either from others, or from our owne corrupt nature. *What have I any more to doe with you?* No, God ſhall be my God, for if I can reſigne my ſelfe wholly to God, and renounce the creature and all things elſe, God will be as a *greene firre tree*, and heare me; I ſhall looſe nothing by it. Be then in love with a Chriſtian courſe, for it is the ſweeteſt and the ſafeſt courſe, and never wants comfort from Heaven, and it is the moſt honourable courſe that can be, for it will hold our communion and peace with the great God of Heaven and Earth: for though we breake with others, we ſhall be ſure of him. In which caſe take heed of that baſe ſuggeſtion which the Divell himſelfe was aſhamed to owne, *That wee ſerve God for naught*. What ſhall we renounce Idolatry and wicked courſes, and thinke that God will not have fruit for us? ſhall I thinke if I leave my ſinnefull gaine, that I or my poſterity ſhall beg or ſtarve for it? doe we ſerve a God that hath no fruit? that is as a dead tree, or a barren wilderneſſe: No, we ſerve a God that had all in himſelfe before he made the world; and hath all the excellency in himſelfe contained in the creatures, it is not in vaine to ſerve him: *Doth Iob ſerve God for nothing?* ſaid the Divell. Therefore it is a ſuggeſtion worſe then ſatanicall, to thinke we ſerve God for nothing: or to thinke like thoſe *Hypocrites* mentioned by the Prophet; that God regards not our faſting, or our devotion. No, we ſhall not looſe a good

Job. 1. 9.

Iſa. 58. 3.

word

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Pſal. 56.8.

word for God, not a teare but he hath a bottle for it, not a ſigh or a groane, or a farthing, not a minutes time well ſpent ſhall be loſt, he will pay us for every ill word we indure for his ſake, for every diſgrace, loſſe or croſſe, doe we ſerve that God there is no fruit in? *From mee is thy fruit found?*

Whatſoever our condition be in the world, let us comfort our ſelves with theſe things, and thinke that it is not in vaine to ſerve the Lord: for we cannot ſerve a richer nor a more kinde maſter and Lord: Firſt of all he gives us opportunity and meanes whereby fruit may be wrought in us, and then he works the fruit of grace and comfort in us, and afterwards rewards and crownes his owne fruite; but we add imperfections and inventions of our owne and ſo marre or ſtaine all, but we deale wirh a gratious God in covenant, who pitties us as a Father doth his children, accepts and rewards what is his, and pardons what is our owne. Therefore let this much be effectuall for the guiding of our lives, and comforting of us in a good courſe. If we take ill courſes we muſt looke for no fruit from God, but fruits of his diſpleaſure; if we eate of the forbidden tree, we ſhall eate and reape *the fruits of our own waies*, bitter fruits, for in this caſe Jeſus Chriſt who is a ſweet Saviour, will be a Judge to us; and he who is *the Lambe of God* will be angry, ſo as we ſhall reape the fruit of his indignation: In the *Revelation*, divers are brought in *deſiring the* Reve. 6.16.

hils and mountaines to fall upon them, to cover them from the preſence of the Lamb. Let us not therefore turne a ſweet Saviour to a rigorous Judge, by adventuring upon courſes wherein we cannot looke for fruit: but let us commend *our ſoules in well-doing unto him, as unto a faithfull Creator and Redeemer.* And as it is *Proverbs.3. Let us acknowledge him in all our wayes,* for it is good to acknowledge and looke to him: that is, looke to him for ſtrength, quickning, ſucceſſe, grace and light to direct us: acknowledge him in all our wayes, and treaſure up this comfort, that *all fruit is found from God.* If wee take good courſes, wee ſhall ever be fruitfull, and have fruit from him, *out of his fulneſſe* for (ſaith hee:) *From mee is thy fruite found.*

1 Pet. 4. 19.

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The end of the thirteenth Sermon.

THE FOVRTEENTH SERMON.

Hos. 14. 10.

Who is wise and he shall understand these things? prudent and he shall know them? for the wayes of the Lord are equall, the just shall walke in them, but the transgressors shall fall therein.

THese wordes seale up the whole Prophecy, for the Prophet immediately before prophecying of the captivity, discovers to them at length their sinnes as we heard their Idolatry, adding new Idols to their former Idols, *Baall* to

the *Calves*, the Princes remooved the bounds, (old orders and lawes) the Prophets they were fooles and did not ſee the judgements of God hanging over their heads; and none of them all could ſee their *gray-haires*, that is, the ſignes of their owne ruine. After which out of a Chriſtian love, care, and conſcience of his duty, by direction of the Spirit of God, hee preſcribes an excellent way how they ſhould carry themſelves, by returning to the Lord, *take words unto your ſelves*, renounce all falſe confidence in *Aſſhur*, and all domeſticke helps at home, horſes and the like, and flye to God as your beſt Sanctuarie. Then hee ſhewes what God will doe to them, anſwer all the deſires he had put into their hearts: *I will heale their Backeſlidings, and love them freely*, &c.

Now becauſe theſe were great matters of great conſequence, to make them either happy in the obſerving them, or miſerable in neglecting them, you ſee how he ſhuts up all in a moſt weighty cloſe: *Who is wiſe and he ſhall underſtand theſe things, prudent and he ſhall know them, for the wayes of the Lord are equall*, &c.

Wherein the ſcope of the Prophet is, to ſtirre up a holy regard of what hath beene ſpoken, he would not have all loſt for want of attention or application, and therefore he here ſtirs them up to a holy uſe of all: which ſtirring up, is excellently and figuratively cloathed with an *Epiphonemy*, or acclamation, *who is wiſe and he ſhall underſtand theſe things*, &c. He doth not

ſay

ſay, let men underſtand theſe things, but *who is wiſe and who is prudent?* Let them conſider of theſe things, and then the *Exhortation* is back't with many Reaſons,

1. It is wiſdome and prudence to regard theſe things that I have ſpoken (*who is wiſe and who is prudent*)
2. And then againe they are the wayes of God that are ſpoken off, and they are ſtraight and equall in themſelves.
3. And they leade to happineſſe directly, without winding and turning, a man is ſure to attaine his journeys end in them, and if they will take example of thoſe who onely are exemplary to them, he tels them *the Iuſt ſhall walke in them*, they ſhall not walke alone, they ſhall have the company of *a cloud of witneſſes*, who proſper and walke on cheerefully in this way, and attaine happineſſe in the end.
4. Then the laſt argument is taken from the contrary end of all them who cavill and ſnarle at Gods wayes and truth, that thinke themſelves witty to picke quarrels with ſomewhat in Gods booke, as it is a common faſhion now a dayes to have a divinity of mens owne: *Tranſgreſſors*, ſuch as are oppoſite to Gods wayes, *they ſhall fall in theſe wayes*, that is they take offence at theſe wayes and ſo fall into ſinne, and by falling into ſinne, fall into miſery, till at laſt they fall into Hell, which is the end of all quar-

rellers with divine truth, they fall and dash themselves upon them, and so eternally perish.

Now these are strong and forcible reasons to inforce care and attention of what hath been spoken, it is *Wisdome* and *Prudence*, and *the wayes of the Lord* here *are streight*, and then *all godly people walke in them, and those that stumble at them are sure to perish, and doe perish in them*; not that they are a cause of their perishing, but by reason of the malice of men, finding fault and picking quarrels with them, they fall first into sinne, and then into misery, thus we have the scope of the words.

Who is wise and he shall understand these things.

First of all, we must know that the Prophet here in this figurative speech makes a kinde of Exclamation, *who is wise?* he doth as it were secretly mourne at the Apostacy and fewnesse of those that be truely wise, as if he had said, I have given you many directions, and shewed you what sinnes lead to destruction, I have shewed what course yee are to take, and the bountie of God to those that Returne: but, *Who is Wise and Prudent to regard these things?*

In the words therefore (in regard of the speaker, the Prophet) we may observe this ere we come particularly to them: the character of a holy, mercifull, gratious, and wiseman, that when he hath spoken things to excellent purpose, he would not have those things lost, but out of mercy and compassion mingled with

a great deale of heavenly wiſdome, would have the beſt fruit of all he hath ſpoken. Which was the cuſtome of the men of God in the Scriptures, the Spirit of God leading them to ſtrike the naile home, when they taught truths to lay the word cloſe upon the conſcience, as much as they could. What is the whole book of *Deutrenomie*, as the word ſignifieth, but a repeating of the former lawes? *Moſes* thought all to no purpoſe, unleſſe he repeated lawes, and faſtned them upon the ſoule: ſo our Saviour Chriſt ſtill when he had ſpoken excellent things, ſaith, *Let him that hath eares to heare, heare.* So ſaith *Ieremy*, *who is wiſe to conſider theſe things?* and the concluſion of that excellent 107. *Pſalme*, is juſt thus, *who is wiſe to conſider theſe things?* and *Deuter.* 32. ſaith *Moſes*, *O that they were wiſe, that they would thinke of theſe things*, &c. So every where in Scripture you have ſuch faſtning of things where truthes have beene ſpoken in application of them: which doth juſtifie the courſe of Gods Meſſengers in bringing the Word home unto mens conſciences, becauſe that which is ſpoken looſely in generall, no man applyeth in particular to himſelfe, we who are meſſengers of God, muſt therefore bring things home to the conſcience: *who is wiſe and he ſhall underſtand theſe things*, &c.

Mat. 11. 15. Iere. 9. 12.

But that which more neerely concerneth us is, whereas firſt of all he propounds this exhortation to regard theſe things under this holy acclamation

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acclamation: *who is wiſe and who is prudent?* we ſee firſt of all,

Obſerv. *That there are but few who are truely wiſe and prudent.*

Few that enter the right way: for our Saviour ſheweth that *narrow is this way and few there be that finde it.* Mat. 7. 14. The point needs not much proofe it is ſo plaine, and well knowne, wherefore it is now touched onely making way to other things. The Reaſon heereof is cleere.

Reaſon. Moſt men we ſee live by ſenſe, will, and paſſion, and not by Faith, whereby they inthrall the wiſdome they have, and make it priſoner to finnefull paſſions and affections, rejecting thoughts of their owne future happineſſe: and though it behoove them in this world to bee broken of their will: yet they will have it here, though they periſh and be damned for it hereafter. This is the ſtate of the unbroken heart of man till he have grace in him. Yea it is the ſtate of all men, eſpecially thoſe that are puft up, either by their owne place, humour, or the flattery of others, they will have their will: *Mens mihi pro Regno*, as one ſaid. Now this being the proud poyſonfull nature of man, we muſt not thinke it a ſtrange thing, that there are ſo few wiſe and prudent: for a man cannot be wiſe and paſſionate, for his paſſion transformes him to be a beaſt, a Divell. Now becauſe moſt men live by ſenſe and by humour, which is a life they are nuzled in (eſpecially thoſe that

are

are ſubject to flatterers) therefore few come to be truely wiſe and prudent, to have ſo much ſtedineſſe and ſobriety of ſpirit, as to deliberate what is to be done. They will not in cold blood give leiſure to their humors (but feed them) to conſider what is beſt. This being the humor of the world, no wonder that there be ſo few prudent and wiſe.

Vſe. 1. Since things are thus, learne this of it, if there be ſo few prudent and wiſe, as the Prophets complaine in all times. *To whom is the arme of the Lord revealed*; and, *Who hath beleeved our report*, &c. Then take heed of living by example, that we be not led away with the ſway and error of the times: for ſeeing there are few *wiſe and prudent*, it is better and ſafer to follow one man reformed by judgement, then a thouſand others, one man is worth a thouſand who is led with judgement and by the Spirit of God. Iſa. 53. 1.

Vſe 2. And likewiſe take no ſcandall, if you ſee men runne upon heapes in the broad and worſt way, for that men have alwayes done, it is the complaint of all the Prophets in all times, calling the better ſort few: *as the grapes after the vintage, like a few ſcattered eares of corne after harveſt: one of a Citty, and two of a Tribe*, a few of all. Therefore now let us ſeale this truth with this exhortation. Iſa. 17. 5, 6. Jer. 3. 14.

Vſe. 3. That we labour to be of that few that are truely wiſe and prudent, examine are we of thoſe few or not? and what have we in us that may

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may ſecure us to be of this ſmall number; for if we be not, we ſhall never be ſaved. For Chriſts flocke is *a little flocke*; and few there be that ſhall enter in at that ſtraite gate: what haſt thou then which may diſcover unto thine owne ſoule that thou art of that number, and not of the common multitude that ſhall be damned? it is a thing worth the inquiring of our ſoules; what have we in us that may charactariſe us to be Gods true ſervants, Chriſts true children, and members of the Church? and never reſt in a common perſwaſion of common grace, which caſtawayes may have as well as we. We muſt ſtrive for ſome diſtinct grace that reprobates cannot attaine unto.

Luk. 12. 32.

Who is wiſe and he ſhall underſtand theſe things, prudent, &c.

But to come more particularly to the words, *Who is wiſe and he ſhall underſtand theſe things*, The holy man of God here in his exhortation naming *wiſedome*, ſingling out *wiſe* and *prudent* men; *Who is wiſe* and *who is prudent?* he toucheth men upon the quicke right veine, for who is there that would not be thought wiſe and prudent? a corrupt man naturally rather deſires to be thought ſinnefull then weake, judge him as you will, ſo you judge him not to be an unwiſe, an unprudent man. A proud man till he be ſubdued and humbled, had rather be thought diſhoneſt then ſimple, becauſe if hee be diſhoneſt, he thinkes it is out of choice: but to be ſimple, this argueth imperfection, and not freedome

freedome and bravery of ſpirit: therefore it being the naturall deſire and inſtinct of all men to be thought wiſe and to bee ſo, hee endeavours to worke upon that affection in them, *Who is wiſe*,&c. Well ſaith he, I know you all deſire to be thought *wiſe* and *prudent* men, would you make it good that you are ſo indeed? beleeve my ſayings, this is the way, whoſoever is wiſe let him underſtand theſe things, and he that is prudent let him hearken to theſe things that I have ſpoken.

Man at firſt when he had communion with wiſedome it ſelfe was a wiſe creature, till he hearkened to Sathan and ſo loſt all, *becomming as the beaſts which periſh*. Yet in that glorious building, ſince the corruption of nature this amongſt that rubbiſh is reſerved, that above all things there is a deſire to be happy and wiſe, which two deſires are naturally the leading deſires in men, *To deſire to doe well, and to be wiſe*. Therefore the Prophet here upon that which is left in mans nature takes advantage to build true wiſdome and knowledge indeed. Pſal. 49.12.

To come then in briefe to ſhew what this *wiſedome* and *prudence* is, for there is ſome diſtinction betweene *wiſedome* and *prudence*. Wiſedome is a heavenly light ſet up in the ſoule by the Spirit of God, whereby it diſcerneth the generall truths concerning God, our ſelves, the ſtate of the Church, the priviledges of Chriſtianity, and ſuch like: in ſumme it is a right divine apprehenſion of ſpirituall truths. *Definition of heavenly wiſdome.*

And

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Definition of heavenly prudence.

And prudence, this is a kinde of ſharpeneſſe of ſpirit, whereby the Spirit of God directs the ſoule, knowing the right generall principles to particular caſes. Prudence is an application of the generall knowledge of generall things to particulars, and is an ordering of the life in particular exigencies and caſes in a right order, according to the direction of the Spirit, as wee have it, *Prov.8.I wiſdome dwell with prudence.* Divine *wiſedome* whereſoever it is dwells with *prudence*; that is, where God doth inlighten the underſtanding to conceive aright of the miſteries of ſalvation, there it dwells with prudence, that is, it directs the ſoule to an orderly carriage of life towards God and man, and in regard of it ſelfe, every way as it ſhould doe, in all eſtates, times and conditions, that is meant here by *prudence*, a particular gift whereby a man is fit to conſult and deliberate of things in particular to be done, in particular caſes of conſcience and the like. Now *wiſedome* and *prudence* they are both together in Gods people, howſoever perhaps one is more excellent then another. Some are wiſer who have a deeper ſearch of truths in generall: and ſome are more prudent in their wayes, that are weaker Chriſtians for the maine generall truths. Yet there is not a good Chriſtian but he hath ſo much *prudence* as will bring him to Heaven. But God giveth extraordinary wiſedome to ſome, becauſe they are leaders of others. Yet though in Gods diſpenſation there be a difference,

ference, yet in every Chriſtian they are joyned together, there is no Chriſtian but hee is wiſe for himſelfe, which is *Prudence*. This is as it were the ſalt which ſeaſoneth all other graces, and knowledge whatſoever: for what is knowledge without diſcretion, but a fooliſh humour? what is Patience but blockiſhneſſe, if a man doe not diſcerne how, why and upon what ground to be patient? what is Religiouſneſſe without this, but ſuperſtition, and what is Zeale but an indiſcreet heate, if it be not ſeaſoned with this Prudence? yea and what is Conſtancy it ſelfe, but an indiſcreet rigour and ſtifneſſe without wit. So that it is the ſeaſoning of all other graces whatſoever, that which puts bounds and meaſure unto all: therefore hee joynes it with Wiſdome, *who is wiſe and who is prudent?* good as we ſay conſiſts of a whole entire cauſe, unto which muſt be occurrence of all circumſtances together, one defect may make it to be ſinnefull. So this is *Prudence* to obſerve a due order cloathed with circumſtances of the manner and ſeaſon of every good action and duty, therefore he joynes heere *Prudence. Who is wiſe and he ſhall underſtand theſe things, prudent and he ſhall know them?*

Now theſe be the two graces that leade and guide a mans life: there muſt be firſt a generall underſtanding and light of the ſoule, and then there muſt be a particular light to apply this generall to particulars. *Prudence* is as it were the ſteward of the ſoule, which diſpenceth the

the light thereof according to particular occaſions.

Now for *Wiſdome* and *Prudence*, we will not inſiſt long on them, onely we will draw towards a right diſcerning of them ſquared and proportioned to our underſtandings by reſemblances of other things: for a man may know what they are in divine things, by ſome proportion to humane things, what they are there, as to give a little light to it.

Signes of worldly wiſedome.

1. He is a *wiſe prudent* man in the world that will be ſure to make the greateſt his friend. So God being the greateſt of all and moſt able to doe us good, he is a wiſe and prudent man that makes him his friend, and cares not who hee breake with, ſo he breake not with God.

2. And we account him alſo a *wiſe* and *prudent* man in the world, that like the wiſe ſteward in the Goſpell provides for the worſt times: what courſe did he take for himſelfe herein, hee provides for, as he fore-ſees danger. So ſpirituall Wiſdome and Prudence will direct a man what is beſt for his latter end, his eternall reſt and happineſſe in another world. Heavenly wiſdome prefixeth to a man a full view of his latter end, and that which followeth thereupon in another world, and ſo makes him provide before hand, and direct all things to that end. A wiſeman will not have things to ſeeke when he comes to make uſe of them, like the fooliſh virgins who had their oyle to ſeeke when they ſhould have had it ready. He is truely ſpiritu-

Mat. 16. 3.

Mat. 25.

ally

ally wise towards his latter end, that as hee knowes there is a state to come, so is truely prudent to have all things ready against that time, that considering the uncertainety of this life, hee may not bee surprized unawares, like those glorious virgins who had a lamp without oyle.

3. And amongst men he is also counted a *wise* and *prudent* man, that makes a right choice, for this is *wisdome*, when a man discerneth a difference, and answerably makes his choice. *Simile mater erroris*, saith one, Likenesse is the mother of error. There is a likenesse betweene good and bad in the world, and betweene truth and error, now hee is a wiseman, who is not catcht with these resemblances, but discerneth a difference between temporall & eternall things, shadowes & substances, realities and appearances of things, and suitably chooseth eternals before temporals, the favour of God before the favour of men, and in a word those things which concerne everlasting happines, before those that are perishing; *Wisdome* is seen in choice. By these few instances named, we may see what heavenly *wisdome* and *prudence* is, by proportion of *Wisdome* and *Prudence* in earthly things. Now considering that there is a better state in another world then in this, he must needs be a wise man that orders things so, as that he may not loose eternity. Most men in the world are penny-wise and pound foolish, as we say: wise to a particular end, to get particular favours and

Deut. 32. 29.

riches, ſo to ſatisfie their intentions: but for the maine which is *Wiſdome* indeed, to looke to their laſt eſtate and happineſſe, and to fit their actions and courſes that way, how few are wiſe to purpoſe? how few provide for eternity? therefore no marvell the Prophet ſaith, *who is wiſe and who is prudent?* becauſe men live by ſenſe and not by Faith.

Who is wiſe and he ſhall underſtand theſe things? prudent and he ſhall know them.

Obſerv. Now the next thing to be obſerved hence is this, *That the wiſe and prudent onely know theſe things*, There muſt be *Wiſdome* and *Prudence* before we can know divine Truthes and make uſe of them: and then obſerve further, *Obſerv.* *That true Wiſdome and Prudence carries men to Gods Word.* Who is wiſe to underſtand theſe things? by divine Truth we grow *wiſe* and *prudent*, the Spirit ioyning with the ſame, and then we come to make a right uſe of them. There muſt bee firſt a ſpirituall *Wiſdome* and *Prudence* inlightned by the Spirit, ere we can make uſe of the word aright to taſte and reliſh it. Becauſe though the word be light, yet light alone is not ſufficient to cauſe ſight, but there muſt concurre unto the outward light an inward ſight: grace muſt illuminate the underſtanding and put a heavenly light into the ſoule. As by the light within meeting with the light without, the eye being the inſtrument of ſight, applying it ſelfe to the thing, thence comes ſight. So there be divine Truthes out of us, wherewith when the Holy Ghoſt

Ghoſt puts an inward light into the ſoule, ſanctified *VViſdome* and *Prudence*, then the inward light meeting with the light without, we ſee and apprehend. The Spirit therefore muſt joyne to worke *VViſdome* and *Prudence*. Naturally we are all dead and have loſt our ſpirituall ſenſes, therefore the Spirit of God muſt worke in us ſpirituall ſences, ſight and taſte, that wee may ſee, diſcerne, and reliſh heavenly things; which ere we can doe, there muſt be a harmony betwixt the ſoule and the things, that is the ſoule muſt be made ſpirituall anſwerable to the heavenly things pitched upon, or elſe if the ſoule be not ſet in a ſuteable frame, it can never make a right uſe of them.

Now when the underſtanding of a man is made wiſe by the Spirit of God, it will reliſh *Wiſdome* and *Prudence*. For the Spirit of God together with the Scripture takes the ſcales off the eyes of the ſoule, ſubdues rebellious paſſions in the affections, eſpecially that rebellion of the will, putting a new reliſh in all, ſo as they come to love affect and joy in heavenly things. Now when theſe ſcales of ſpirituall blindneſſe are fallen off the eyes of the ſoule, and when rebellion is remooved from the will and affections, then it is fit to joyne and approove of heavenly things, elſe there is a contrariety and Antipathy betwixt the ſoule and theſe things: as the body, when the tounge is affected with ſome aguiſh humour, cannot reliſh things, though they be never ſo good, but affects and

reliſheth all things ſuiting that diſtemper. So it is with the ſoule when it is not inlightned, it judgeth all things carnally, there being an antipathy betweene the ſoule and divine truths brought home unto it, perhaps a ſoule not inlightned or ſanctified, will apprehend the generallities of truth very well: but when they are preſſed home to practiſe, then unleſſe the ſoule be changed, it will riſe up and ſwell againſt divine truths, and reject the practiſe of them. Without ſubduing grace to alter and change the ſoule, the affections thereof are like the March Sunnes, which ſtirre up a great many humors, but not ſpending them, they breed aguiſh humors and diſtempers. So the light of the word in a carnall heart, it meets with the humours of the ſoule and ſtirres them; but if there be not grace in the ſoule to ſubdue theſe affections, it ſtirres them up to be the more malicious, eſpecially if they be preſt to particular duties in leaving of ſinnefull courſes: ſo that the Spirit of God muſt alter the underſtanding, and ſubdue the will and affections, ere there can be a conceiving of divine truths ſavingly. Therefore before theſe acts, he joynes theſe graces: *Who is wiſe, and who is prudent*, &c.

Vſe. The uſe hereof is this much, not to come to the divine truth of God with humane affections and ſpirits, but to lift up our hearts to God. Why Lord as things themſelves are ſpirituall, ſo make me ſpirituall, that there may be a harmony

mony betweene my ſoule and the things, that a[s] there is a ſweet relliſh in divine truths, ſo there may be a ſweet taſte in mee, to anſwer that relliſh which is in divine truths, that the wiſdome of thy word and my wiſedome may be one, then a man is wiſe. There is not the commoneſt truth, or practicall point in Divinity, but it is a miſtery and muſt be divinely underſtood, and muſt have *prudence* to goe about it as we ſhould doe. Repentance and the knowledge of ſinne, it is a miſtery, till a man be ſanctified in his underſtanding he can never know what ſpirituall miſery is, till the inward man be inlightned and ſanctified to know what a contrariety there is betweene ſinne and the Spirit of God. As no man can know throughly what ſickneſſe is, but he that hath beene ſicke, for the Phiſitian doth not know ſickneſſe ſo well as the patient who feeles it. So it is with a holy man ſanctified by the Holy Ghoſt, tell him of ſinne, he feeles it, and the noiſomeneſſe of it, the oppoſition of it to his comfort and communion with God. Onely the ſpirituall inlightned man can tell what Repentance, ſin, ſorrow for ſin, and the ſpirituall health of the ſoule is. Therefore it is ſaid here, *Who is wiſe, and who is prudent? and he ſhall underſtand theſe things.*

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The end of the fourteenth Sermon.

THE FIFTEENTH SERMON.

Hos. 14. 10.

Who is wise and he shall understand these things? prudent and he shall know them? for the wayes of the Lord are right, the just shall walke in them, but the transgressors shall fall therein.

AT length by divine assistance, we are come unto the conclusion of this short Chapter, wherin the Holy Ghost from God hath shewed such bowells of mercy and tender compassion unto miserable sinners, incouraging them

to returne unto the Lord, by many and ſeverall arguments, being formerly inſiſted upon: our laſt worke was to ſhew you what *Wiſdome* and *prudence* was, the difference of them, and how that none without theſe endowments are able to know and make uſe of divine Truthes and miſteries of Religion. *Who is wiſe and he ſhall underſtand theſe things? prudent and he ſhall know them?* &c.

We came then to ſhew that there muſt be *Prudence* and *Wiſdome*, before wee can underſtand divine Truthes, there muſt be an illumination within: it is not ſufficient to have the light of the Scripture outwardly, but there muſt be a light of the eye to ſee: there muſt be *wiſdome* and *Prudence* gathered from the Scriptures. Now *Wiſdome* and *Prudence*, if they be divine (as here is meant) it is not a diſcreet managing of outward affaires of our perſonall condition, but an ordering of our courſe to Heavenward. Wherefore a man may know whether he be *wiſe* and *prudent* by his reliſhing of divine Truthes, for otherwiſe he is not *wiſe* and *prudent* in theſe things, which are the maine.

Now having ſhewed, that onely the *wiſe* and *prudent* can conceive and make a right uſe of theſe great things delivered, he comes to ſhew and defend the equity of Gods wayes, how crooked ſoever they ſeeme to fleſh and blood: theſe things ought to be hearkned unto, becauſe they are the wayes of God.

The wayes of the Lord are right.

By

By *wayes* heere he underſtandeth the whole Law and Goſpell, the whole Word of God, which he calleth *right*, not onely becauſe

1. *They are Righteous in themſelves, but*
2. *Becauſe they reforme whatſoever is amiſs in us and rectifie us*, and
3. *Worke whatſoever is needfull for our good and ſalvation.*

Now more particularly, *Gods wayes* are

1. *Thoſe wayes wherein he walks to us: or*
2. *The wayes that he preſcribes us to walk in, and*
3. *Our wayes as they are conformable to his.*

Any of theſe are the wayes of God, of all which more heereafter.

I. *Gods wayes to us.*

The wayes wherein he walkes to us, becauſe many of them are untraceable as unſearchable to us, are not here meant. As thoſe of *Election*, *Predeſtination*, and *Reprobation*: the reaſons whereof, if we take them comparatively, cannot be ſearched out, why God ſhould take one and not another, it is an unſearchable way. But take a man ſingle (out of compariſon) the wayes of God will appeare to be right, even in that harſh decree which many men ſtumble ſo much at, for none are ever brought in the execution of that decree to be damned, but you ſhall ſee *the wayes of the Lord right*, who a long time together offers them a great deale of mercy, which they refuſing, and reſiſting the Holy Ghoſt, taking wilfully contrary courſes, worke out their owne damnation. So that at length the iſſue of thoſe unſearchable wayes will appeare

peare to be right in every particular, howſoever the comparative reaſon at the firſt, why God ſingles out one man and not another will not appeare.

2. *The wayes of his Providence, &c.*

As for the *wayes of his Providence*, in governing the world and ruling of his Church, this is the way of God which is right: all which wayes though we cannot in all particulars ſee in this world; yet in Heaven in the light of glory we ſhall ſee what cannot now be ſeene in the light of grace and nature. For there be miſteries in *Providence*, who can tell the reaſon why of men equally good, one ſhould bee ſorely afflicted, and the other ſhould goe to Heaven without any affliction in a ſmooth way? none can give a reaſon of it, but we muſt ſubſcribe to the hidden wiſdome of God, whoſe wayes are unſearchable in his *Providence*, yet are they moſt right, though they be above our conceit. If wee could conceive all Gods wayes, then they were not Gods wayes: for in his wayes to us, he will ſo carry them as he will ſhew himſelfe to bee above and beyond our ſhallow conceits.

But the wayes eſpecially here meant are the wayes which he preſcribes us to walke in, and they are,

1. *What we muſt beleeve, and then,*
2. *What we muſt doe, there is,*
Firſt, Obedience of Faith, and then
Obedience of life.

Theſe are Gods wayes preſcribed in the wor p

word and only in the word.

Now *our wayes*, when they joyne with *Gods wayes*, that is, when our life, purpoſes and deſires of the inner man, in our ſpeeches, carriage and converſation agree with Gods wayes, then in ſome ſort they are Gods wayes, *the juſt ſhall walke in them.* They ſhall walke in theſe wayes, that is, in thoſe wayes which God preſcribeth. As for thoſe wayes wherein God walkes to us, we have not ſo much to doe here to conſider them. But by walking in the wayes which he preſcribes, we ſhall feele that his wayes to us will be nothing but mercy and truth. *The wayes of the Lord are right*, thoſe wayes that he preſcribes to men to be beleeved and done, they are right and ſtreight, that is, they are agreeable to the firſt rule of all. Right is the judgement and will of God: He is the firſt truth, and the firſt good, the prime truth and good, which muſt rule all others, *Menſura menſurans*, as they uſe to ſpeake in Schooles, the meaſure that meaſures all other things: for all other things are onely ſo farre right; as they agree to the higheſt meaſure of all, which is Gods appointment and will. So *the wayes of God* are ſaid to be *right*, becauſe they agree to his word and will: they are holy and pure, as himſelfe is juſt, pure and holy.

3. *Our wayes joyning with Gods wayes.*

Pſal. 25. 16.

The wayes of the Lord are right.

Right, as they agree to that which is *right*, and ſtreight, and right likewiſe, becauſe they lead directly to a right end. We know a right line

line is that which is the ſhorteſt betweene two tearmes, that which leads from point to point is the ſhorteſt of all other lines. So *Gods wayes are right and ſtreight*, there are no other wayes which tend directly to happineſſe, without error, but Gods wayes, all other wayes are crooked wayes. So Gods wayes are *right*, as they looke to God, and as they looke unto all other inferiour courſes: they are *right* to examine all our wayes by, being the rule of them. And they are *right*, as they looke to Gods will and are ruled by him.

The wayes of the Lord are right

Hence obſerve we in the firſt place, that the firſt thing wee ſhould looke too in our converſation, muſt be to know this for a ground,

Obſerv. *That man is not a preſcriber of his owne way, and that no creatures will is a rule.*

We muſt imbrace therefore no opinion of any man, or any courſe injoyned or preſcribed by any man, further then it agrees with the firſt *truth* and the firſt *right*, *Gods wayes are right*: *right*, as a ſtandard that is a meaſure to meaſure all other meaſures by. So Gods *will* and *truth* revealed is a right rule, and the meaſure of all other rules whatſoever. Directions therefore which we have of things to be beleeved and done from men, muſt be no further regarded then as they agree with the firſt ſtandard. Therfore they are miſtaken, and deſperately miſtaken, that make any mans will a rule, unleſſe it be ſubordinate to that which is higher, at which time

time it becometh all one with the higher rule. When a man ſubordinates his directions to Gods, then Gods and his are all one. Otherwiſe without this ſubordination, wee make men gods, when we make their will a rule of our Obedience. *The wayes of the Lord are right.* But of this onely a touch by the way: the maine point hence is,

The Word of the Lord is every way perfect and brings us to perfection. Obſerv.

As we may ſee at large prooved. *Pſalme.* 19. 7,&c. Where whatſoever is Good, Comfortable, Profitable, or Delightfull, either for this life or the life to come is all to bee had from thence. And the Wiſeman ſaith, *Every word of God is pure,*&c. Pro. 30. 5. A ſimilitude taken from gold which is fined till it be pure, as it is expreſſed in another place, *The words of the Lord are pure words, as ſilver tryed in a fornace of earth and puriſied ſeven times.* Pſal. 12. 6. And ſo the Apoſtle to *Timothy.* 2 Tim. 3. 16. *All Scripture is given by inſpiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Correction, for Reproofe, for inſtruction in Righteouſneſſe, that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good workes.*

Since then the wayes of God are ſo Right, Juſt, Pure, and Perfect, this is firſt for Reproofe of them that adde hereunto: as our Romiſh adverſaries who doe heerein by their traditions and additions, condemne God either of want of Wiſedome, Love and Goodneſſe, or of all. So as all defects charged upon the Word, are Vſe. 1.

charged

charged upon God himſelfe, who did not better provide and fore-ſee for his Church, what was good for it. But the Wiſe man condemneth this their audacious boldneſſe, where he ſaith, Pro 30.6. *Adde thou not unto his words, leaſt he reproove thee, and thou be found a lyar.* They barre reading of the Scriptures, or to reade them in engliſh eſpecially, leaſt the people become Hereticks. They thinke it ſafe to reade their owne bookes and idle dreames, but reject the Word of God, and then (as *Ieremy* ſpeakes) Jer. 8. 9. *What wiſedome is in them?* Surely none at all, for the onely wiſdome is to be governed by Gods moſt holy word.

Vſe. 2. Againe, it is for Inſtruction unto us, to reſt and rely upon this ſo holy, right, pure, and perfect word. Since it is ſo ſure and firme, we are to reſt upon the Promiſes, and tremble at the threatnings, though we ſee not preſent performance of them, becauſe not one of them ſhall faile. Mat. 5. 18. For (ſaith Chriſt) *Heaven and Earth ſhall paſſe away, but one jot and title of the Law ſhall not faile.* What maketh ſo many judgements to overtake men, but their unbeliefe? what made their carcaſes to fall in the wilderneſſe, ſo as they could not enter into the land of *Canaan*, but their unbeliefe? for (ſaith the text of them) Heb 3. 19. *They could not enter becauſe of unbeliefe.* Infidelity and not beleeving God, is the roote and cauſe of all our woe. It beganne with our firſt Parents, and it cleaveth too cloſe unto us, even unto this day. This commeth

from

from our Atheiſme and ſelfe-love, that if a mortall man promiſe or ſweare unto us, we beleeve him and reſt upon his word: but all that the great God can doe unto us by Promiſes, Commandements, Threatnings, Allurements, and gratious Examples, will not make us give credit to his word, but rather believe Satan, and our owne falſe and deceitfull hearts. As for inſtance, God hath promiſed that *If our ſinnes were as red as ſcarlet, yet he will make them whiter then the ſnow*, though they be never ſo ſtrong for us, yet *he hath promiſed to ſubdue them.* If our wants be never ſo great, yet if we will truſt in God, he hath promiſed to relieve us, and hath ſaid, *that he will not faile us nor forſake us*, if wee caſt our care upon him. So for the Threatnings, we muſt beleeve that there is never a one of them, but they ſhall come to paſſe, as ſure as the promiſes ſhall bee made good. If theſe thoughts were firmely ſetled in us, that *the wayes of the Lord are right*, and therefore muſt be all accompliſhed in their time, it would make us reſtleſſe to flie from ſinne, and the puniſhments threatned, which all *lye at the doore*, and will quickly be upon us, if they be not avoyded by ſound and hearty Repentance.

Iſa. 1. 18. Iſa. 50. 10. Heb. 13. 5.

Gen. 4. 7.

Laſtly, if every commandement be right ſure and juſt, then when God commandeth doe it, though the apparent danger be never ſo great and though it be never ſo contrary to fleſh and blood, pleaſure, profit, or preferment, yet know it is firme and ſure, and that our happineſſe ſtands

Vſe. 3.

ſtands in doing it, our miſery in diſobeying it. As we know it was with *Adam*: what a ſuddaine change did his diſobedience worke in himſelf, all the world ſince being leavened with that miſerable contagious fal of his. And for the whole word, this is a generall, we never want any good, but for want of love and obedience unto it. *Great Proſperity ſhall they have* (ſaith *David*) *who love thy law, and no evill ſhall come unto them.* And we never had nor ſhall have any hurt, but from our unbeliefe and diſobedience to the holy, pure, and perfect word of God, which is attended with comfort and proſperity heere, and endleſſe Glory heereafter.

Pſal. 119. 165.

The wayes of the Lord are right.

In the next place, *If the wayes of the Lord be right and ſtreight*, ſo ſtreight that they leade directly to the right end, then it is cleere,

Obſerv. *That the beſt way to come to a good and right end is to take Gods wayes.* For it is a right way, and the right way is alwayes the ſhorteſt way. Therefore when men take not Gods wayes, preſcriptions and courſes, they goe wide about, and ſeldome or never come to their intended end. Gods *way* is the right *way*, and therefore brings a man to his right end. Sometimes men will have their turnings, their *diverticula* and vagaries, but they find by experience that *Gods wayes* they are the *right wayes*, ſo as they never attaine to comfort and peace untill they come againe into thoſe *wayes*. God untill then ſuffereth

ſuffereth them to be ſnared and hampered, and to eate the fruit of their owne wayes, and then they ſee the difference of Gods wayes and theirs, and that Gods wayes are the beſt, and the ſtreighteſt wayes unto true happineſſe.

Indeed God ſuffers ſometimes men that will have their owne wayes, to come quickly to them, as ſome men haſten to be rich, and God ſuffers them to bee rich haſtily: yet they are none of Gods wayes which they take, but climbe up by fraud and deceit. I but that is only a particular end, which God ſuffereth them to attaine by bie wayes: but what will be the up-ſhot? Where will all theſe wayes end at length? ſurely in Hell. For when a man goes out of the right, and ſtreight, and direct way, to be great in the world, he is like a man vvho goes out of his way, vvhich is further about, who yet when he is in that vvay goes on through thicke and thinne, becauſe he will gaine ſome way. He goes on through thickets and hedges, faire and foule where he gets many ſcratches, bruſhes, and knocks. Do any thinke in the world to attaine his particular ends, vvithout the direct vvayes of God, God may ſuffer him to attaine his particular end, but vvith many flawes, knocks and bruſhes upon his conſcience, vvhich many times he carrieth vvith him unto his grave, and findes it a great deale better, both to attaine unto his particular ends by *Gods wayes*, and to have no more of any thing in the world then he can have vvith a good conſci-

ence. For though they be good men, oft-times God suffers such men to have bruses in their conscience all their dayes; that they and others may know, that the best way, is the streight and right way, which at last will bring us best to our end.

Having thus made it good, *That the wayes of the Lord are right*; now for coucluſion of all the Prophet begins to shew the divers effects these *right wayes of God* have in two sorts of people, the *godly and wicked.*

1. *That the just shall walke in them.*
2. *That the Transgressors shall fall therein.*

Who be just men?

The just shall walke in them; who be the just men here spoken off? Such are just men who give to every one their due, that gives God his due in the first place, and man in the second place, whereby it is framed. *The just shall walk in them*; that is, they shall proceed and goe on in them till they be come to the end of their race, the Salvation of their soules. And more particularly.

I. *They respect all Gods Commandements.*

Just men, first are such, who have a respect unto al Gods commandements. *Psa.* 119. 6. Though in their disposition they find some more hard to them then others, yet they doe not allow themselves to breake any, but strive so much the more earnestly and constantly to observe them, as they finde their natures opposite to them. Now Hypocrites howsoever they doe many things in shew, yet like *Herod* and *Iudas* their hearts run in a wrong channell, they allow themselves

themſelves to live in, and like of ſome ſinne. The young man in the Goſpell, had not a reſpect unto all Gods Commandements, though Chriſt loved his aimiable parts; to this purpoſe *Iames* ſaith, *Whoſoever ſhall keepe the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.* That is, hee who alloweth himſelfe in any one ſinne, he is guilty of all. Aske *Iudas*, is murder good? he would have ſaid no: but he was covetous and allowed himſelfe in it, and ſo drew upon him the guilt of all the reſt. God is he who forbids ſinning againſt them all: he who forbids one, forbids all: and being rightly turned to God, the ſame authority makes us leave all: it is not ſinne, but the allowance of it that makes an Hypocrite. Mat. 19. Iam. 2. 10.

2. *They doe things to a good end.*

Againe, they doe things to a good end, the Glory of God, and the good of man. For want heereof, the almes, prayers and faſting of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* (becauſe they did nothing out of love to God or man, but for vaine glory and carnall reſpects) are condemned of Chriſt. So ſome are brought in at the laſt day ſaying, *Lord, Lord, have we not in thy name prophecied, and in thy name caſt out Divels, and in thy name done many wonderfull works:* and yet Chriſt profeſſeth not to know them, but calleth them *workers of iniquity.* They had *Gifts* and *Calling* and delivered true doctrine, *&c.* But heere was their failing, *They prophecied in his name, but not for his Name.* Their actions were good in themſelves, and for others, but the end of Mat. 7. 22.

them was naught, and therefore both they and their workes are condemned. Yet this is not ſo to be underſtood, but that Gods children have ſome thoughts of vaine-glory which accompanieth and creepeth into their beſt actions, but they doe acknowledge this for a ſin, confeſſe it, and deſire the Lord to pardon and ſubdue it, and then it ſhall never be laid to their charge. Becauſe having of infirmities is not contrary to ſincerity, but allowing of them, and living in them, in which caſe the Lord is more pleaſed with our Humiliation for our ſinne, then the motions to vaine-glory did offend him.

3. *A deſire to grow in Grace.*

Thirdly a deſire to grow in grace and to become better and better is a ſigne of uprightnes: Chriſtian Righteouſnes, as it ſees ſtill need, ſo it ſtill deſires more grace and leſſe ſin, becauſe hee who hath a true heart, ſeeth both the want and worth of grace, and feeleth his want. A man feeles not the want of Faith, Humility, and Love, till he have it in ſome ſort, as it is ſaid *Philip.* 3.15. *As many as are perfect are thus minded*, to wit ſo many as are upright, all is one.

4. *By love of the Brethren.* 1 Joh. 3.14.

Laſtly, this juſt uprightneſſe is knowne by love of the Brethren: *By this we know we are tranſlated from death to life, becauſe we love the Brethren.* Contrary to which is that diſpoſition which envieth at all things which ſuites not with their humours, as *Iames* ſpeaketh of thoſe who preferre men and have their perſons

Jam. 2.2.

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in admiration in regard of outward things deſpiſing inferiours.

If therefore we will ever be counted righteous perſons let us keepe theſe rules ſet downe here, have a reſpect to all Gods commandements, doe all things to the glory of God, deſire to grow in grace, and love the Brethren. *Vſe.* 1.

And ſo it is alſo for Conſolation unto ſuch who are thus qualified: for unto them belongeth all the promiſes of this life and of that to come, They are in a bleſſed eſtate, for *all things are theirs*, becauſe they are Chriſts, therefore it is their bounden duty having an upright heart to rejoyce in God, as the Prophet ſpeakes: *Rejoyce in the Lord yee righteous, for praiſe is comely for the upright.* None have cauſe to rejoyce but upright men. 1. Becauſe they of all others have title and right to joy: 2. Becauſe they have command to doe it, ſeeing Heaven is theirs, all the promiſes are theirs, and they are heires of all things: it is a comely ſervice and the worke of Heaven. 2. 1 Cor. 3. 22: Pſal 33. 1. Pſal 5. 2. ult.

Againſt this ſome obiect. O but I find many ſinnes, paſſions, and infirmities in my ſelfe, how then can I joy in God. *Obiect.*

To this we anſwer briefly, that the paſſions and infirmities of Gods ſervants, are not contrary to Chriſtian uprightneſſe, and righteouſneſſe: for Saint *Iames* ſaith, that *Elias was a man ſubiect to like paſſions and infirmities as we are*, yet he was a righteous man, though a man ſubiect to the like paſſions as we are. Therefore *Anſw.* Jam. 5. 17.

the paſſions of Chriſtians are not contrary to Chriſtian, but to legall Righteouſneſſe. But *we are not under the Law but under Grace.* The firſt Covenant of works bids us have no ſinne. The other Covenant bids us allow no ſinne, this much is for that Queſtion what is meant by *juſt men.* It remaines now that we ſhould further enquire into that myſterie, how it is that juſt men *walke in the wayes of God,* and proſper therein: when yet wicked men called *Tranſgreſſors,* fall therein. But this being a miſtery by your patience wee will take time to unfold what we have to ſpeake heereof the next time, if God bee ſo pleaſed.

Rom. 6. 15.

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The end of the fifteenth Sermon.

THE SIXTEENTH SERMON.

Hos. 14. 10.

---The wayes of the Lord are right, the just shall walke in them, but the transgressors shall fall therein.

GODS children have their times of deadnesse and disertion, and againe their times of quickning and rejoycing: weeping doth not allwayes remaine unto them for their portion, *but joy commeth in the morning:* in the worst times the Saints have alwayes some comforts afforded Psal. 30. 5.

ded them which ſupporteth them againſt all the ſtormes and tempeſts they endure: they have alwayes a *Goſhen* to fly too, others ſhall periſh in that way wherein they ſhall walke and eſcape.

The juſt ſhall walke in them, but the tranſgreſſors ſhall fall therein.

Thus farre we are now come in the unfolding of this Chapter, having ſhewed Gods rich and incomparable mercies to miſerable and penitent ſinners, how ready God is to embrace ſuch, as this rebellious people named were, with all the arguments uſed to make them returne unto the Lord: we are now come at laſt unto the upſhot of all, a diſcovery of the ſeverall effect and worke Gods word hath upon both ſorts of people here named and aymed at.

The juſt ſhall walke in them, but the tranſgreſſors ſhall fall therein.

Theſe were very bad times: yet there were juſt men, who walked in the wayes of God, ſo that we ſee.

In the worſt times God will have alwayes a people that ſhall juſtifie wiſedome.

God will have it thus, even in the worſt times, that *the juſt ſhall walke in them:* though before he ſaith, *Who is wiſe and who is prudent?* yet here he ſhewes that there ſhall be a number who ſhall *walke in Gods wayes.* Who though they goe to Heaven alone, yet to Heaven they will though they have but a few that walke in Gods wayes with them, they will rather goe with

correſpondency in outward things, but for the maine, they have a contrary motion. As we ſay of the *Planets*, that they have a motion contrary to the wrapt motion, being carried and hurried about every twenty foure houres with the motion of the Heavens: they have an other motion and circuit of their owne which they paſſe alſo. So it is with Gods people, though in their common carriage they be carried with the common cuſtomes and faſhions of the times: yet they have a contrary motion of their owne, whereby being carried by the helpe of Gods Spirit they goe on in a way to Heaven though the world diſcerne it not, they have a ſecret contrary motion oppoſite to the ſinnes and corruptions of the age and times they live in. Therefore in all ages it is obſerved for a commendation to goe on in a contrary courſe to the preſent times. *Noah* in his time, *Lot* in his time, and *Paul* in his time, who complaines *All men ſeeke their owne:* it is a ſtrange thing that *Paul* ſhould complaine of all *men ſeeking their owne*, even then when the blood of Chriſt was ſo warme, being ſo lately ſhed, and the Goſpell ſo ſpread: yet *all men ſeeke their owne.* And he ſpeakes it with teares, but what became of *Paul* and *Timothy* and the reſt? *But our converſation is in Heaven from whence we looke for the Saviour, the Lord Ieſus Chriſt*, &c. Let all men ſeeke their owne here below as they will, we have our converſation contrary to the world. *Our converſation is in Heaven*, &c. So that they hold

Gen. 6.
Gen 18.
Phil. 2. 21.
Phil 3. 20.

naturall divine goodneſſe, a man may know he belongs to God, if he juſtifie wiſedome in the worſt times: if he ſtand for the truth to the utmoſt, thinking it of more price then his life. It is the firſt degree to Religion, to hate father and mother, wife and children, and all for the Goſpell. Now when a man will juſtifie the truth with the loſſe of any thing in the world, it is a ſigne that man is a good man in ill times.

Therefore in ill times let us labour to juſtifie truth, both the truth of things to be beleeved, and all juſt religious courſes, not onely in caſe of oppoſition being oppoſed, but in example, though wee ſay nothing. *Noah* condemned the world though he ſpake not a word by making an *Arke:* ſo *Lot Sodome*, though he told not all *Sodome* of their faults. So a man may juſtifie good things though he ſpeake not a word to any man: for ſuch a ones life is a confutation and ſufficient witneſſe for God againſt the world. Therefore it is good, though a man doe not confront the world in his ſpeeches: yet notwithſtanding at leaſt to hold a courſe contrary to the world in his converſation. We have need of a great deale of courage to doe this: but there is no heavenly wiſeman, but he is a couragious man; though in his owne ſpirit, he may be a weake man, yet in caſe of oppoſition, Grace will be above Nature, hee will ſhew then his heavenly Wiſedome and Prudence and of what mettall he is made, by juſti-

Luk. 14. 26.
Heb. 11. 7.

fying

with a few that way, then with the wicked in the broad way to Hell: alway God hath ſome who ſhall walke in his way: for if there were not ſome alway who were good, the Earth would not ſtand, for good men they are the Pillars of the world who uphold it. It is not for wicked mens ſake that God upholds the frame of the creatures, and that orderly government, we ſee all is to gather together the number of his elect, of whom in ſome ages there are more and in ſome leſſe of them borne, thereafter as God breathes and blowes with his Spirit. For according to the abundant working of the Spirit, is the number of the elect. Yet in all ages there are ſome, becauſe it is an Article of our Faith, to believe *a holy Catholicke Church*. Now it cannot be an article of Faith unleſſe there were alway ſome that made this Catholike Church: for elſe there ſhould be an act of Faith without an object. Therefore we may alwayes ſay; I believe that there are a number of elect people that walke in the wayes of God to Heaven-wards.

The diſpoſition of juſt men in their places.

And what is the diſpoſition of theſe ſome? to have a countermotion to thoſe of the times and places they live in. Some are fooliſh, not caring for the wayes of God, cavilling at them. But *the juſt ſhall walke in them*; that is, they take a contrary courſe to the world that ſlights wiſedome. Thus in all times it is the diſpoſition of Gods children to goe contrary to the world in the greateſt matters of all. They indeed hold correſpon-

hold out Gods Truth in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe generation, that is when every man takes crooked wayes and courſes in carnall pollicie, yet there are a company that notwithſtanding walke in the right wayes of God cleane contrary to others. The juſt will walke in the right wayes of God. As holy *Ioſhua* ſaid, *Chooſe you what you will doe, but howſoever I and my fathers houſe will ſerve the Lord.* So when many fell from Chriſt for a fit, becauſe his Doctrine ſeemed harſh, *Peter* juſtified that way, when Chriſt asked him, will ye alſo leave me with the reſt who are offended? *Lord* (ſaith he) *whether ſhall we goe?* we have taſted the ſweetneſſe of the Word, and felt the power thereof: *Whether ſhall we goe Lord, thou haſt the words of Eternall life.* So Gods people have an affection carriage and courſe contrary to the world.

Ioſh. 14. 15.

Joh. 6. 68.

Reaſon.

The Reaſon is taken from their owne diſpoſition, they are partaker of the divine nature, which carrieth them up to God-wards againſt the ſtreame and currant of the time.

2 Pet. 1. 3.

Vſe.

The Uſe hereof ſhall be onely a Tryall of our ſelves in evill times, whether or not then we juſtifie Gods wayes and the beſt things. If we doo it is a ſigne we are of the number of Gods elect: to defend and maintaine good cauſes and right opinions, eſpecially in divine truthes, which is the beſt character of a Chriſtian: others in their owne ſpheare have their degree of goodneſſe, but wee ſpeake of ſupernaturall

fying wiſdome in all times: *The juſt ſhall walke therein.* But to come more directly to the words.

The juſt ſhall walke in them.

A juſt and righteous man that is made juſt by them ſhall walke in them. Hence we may obſerve. *That firſt men muſt have ſpirituall life, and be juſt, before they can walke.* Walking is an action of life, there muſt be life before there can be walking, a man muſt firſt have a ſpirituall life, whereby he may be juſt, and then hee will walke as a juſt man. For as wee ſay of a Bowle (it is *Auſtins* compariſon) it is firſt made round and then it runnes round, ſo a man is firſt juſt and then he doth juſtly. It is a conceite of the Papiſts that good works doe juſtifie a man: *Luther* ſayes well, that *a good man doth good works.* Good works make not the man, fruit makes not the tree, but the tree the fruit. So we are juſt firſt; and then we walke as juſt men. We muſt labour to be changed and to have a principle of ſpirituall life, then we ſhall walke and have new feete, eyes, taſte, eares, and ſenſes: all ſhall then be new.

Obſerv.

Againe, in the ſecond place, the neceſſity of it appeares hence that there muſt be firſt ſpirituall life in the inward man, ere a man can walke. Becauſe there will not elſe be a harmony and correſpondency betwixt a man and his wayes. A man will not hold in thoſe wayes that hee hath an Antipathy too: therefore his nature muſt be altered by a higher principle, before he

he can like and delight in the wayes of God. This is that which Gods children deſire firſt of God, that he would alter their natures, inlighten, change and quicken them, worke ſtrongly and powerfully in them, that they may have a Sympathy and liking unto all that is good, firſt they are juſt and then they walke in Gods wayes.

The juſt ſhall walke in them.

Obſerv. In the next place, wee may obſerve hence, *That a juſt man, he being the prudent and wiſe man, he walks in Gods wayes.* That is ſpirituall wiſedome and prudence, together with Grace, Righteouſneſſe and Juſtice, they leade to walking in Obedience. Let no man therefore talke of grace and wiſdome or prudence altering him, further then he makes it good by his walking. He that is juſt walkes as a juſt man; hee that is wiſe, walks wiſely, he that is prudent, walks prudently. Which is ſpoken to diſcover Hypocriſie in men, that would be thought to be good Chriſtians and wiſemen, becauſe they have a great deale of ſpeculative knowledge. I but looke we to our wayes, let them ſhow whether we be wiſe or fooliſh, juſt or unjuſt: Pro. 9. 12. Pro. 14. 8. *If a man be wiſe, he is wiſe for himſelfe,* (as *Salomon* ſaith) to direct his owne wayes. *The wiſdome of the wiſe is to underſtand his owne way that hee is to walke in.* If a man have not wiſedome to direct his way in particular to walke to Heaven-ward, he is but a foole. For a man to know ſo much as ſhall condemne him and be a witneſſe

nesse against him and yet not know so much as to save him, what a miserable thing is this? Now all other men that know much and walke not answerable, they know so much as to condemne them and not to save them. Our Saviour *Christ* he calleth such, *foolish builders*, that know and will not doe: so unlesse there bee a walking answerable to the *Wisedome* and *Prudence* prescribed, a man is but a foolish man. Mat. 7.

Therefore let it be a rule of tryall, would we be thought to be *Wise* and *Prudent*, *Iust* and *Good*? Let us looke to our wayes, are they Gods wayes? doe we delight in these wayes? and make them our wayes, then we are *Wise*, *Prudent* and *Iust*.

The just shall walke in them.

As *the just shall walke in them*; so whosoever walks in them, are *just*, *wise* and *prudent*: for is not he prudent who walks in those wayes that leade directly to eternall happinesse? is not he a wiseman that walks by rule in those wayes where he hath God over him to be his Protector, Ruler, and Defender? is not he a wise man who walks in those wayes that fits him for all conditions whatsoever, prosperity or adversity, life or death? for all estates? he that walkes therefore in Gods wayes must be the onely wise man.

What walking in Gods wayes implyes.

Now what things doth this walking in the wayes of God imply?

I. *Perspicuity to discerne them.*

First Perspicuitie, those who walke in the wayes

wayes of God, they diſcerne thoſe wayes to bee Gods wayes, and diſcerne them aright.

2. *To proceed in them.*

Then when they diſcerne them to be Gods good wayes, anſwerably they proceed in them from ſtep to ſtep, for every action is a ſtep to Heaven or to Hell: ſo a juſt man when hee hath diſcovered a good way, he goes on ſtill.

3. *An uniforme courſe.*

And then he keepes an uniforme courſe, for ſo he doth who walks on in a way, he makes not indentures as he walks, but goes on ſteadie in an uniforme courſe, to a right end. So a juſt man when he hath ſingled out the right way, hee goes on in that ſteedily and uniformly.

4. *Reſolution.*

And likewiſe where it is ſaid the juſt walkes in them, it implyes Reſolution to goe on in thoſe wayes till he come to the end, though there be never ſo much oppoſition.

But how ſhall we know whether we go on in this way or not?

Firſt, he that goes on in a way the further he hath proceeded therein, looking backe, that which he leaves behind ſeemes leſſer and leſſer in his eye, and that which he goes too greater and greater: ſo a man may know his progreſſe in the wayes of God, when earthly profits and pleaſures ſeeme little, his former courſes and pleaſures ſeeming now baſe unto him, when Heaven and heavenly things ſeeme neere unto him, it is a ſigne he is neere Heaven: neere in time, and neerer in diſpoſition and in wiſedome to diſcerne, becauſe the beſt things are greateſt

in

in his eye and eſteeme. In this caſe, it is a ſigne that ſuch a one is removed from the world, and is neere unto Heaven, having made a good progreſſe in the wayes of God.

It implyes likewiſe in the ſecond place, an uniforme courſe of life. Such a one doth not duties by ſtarts now and then, but conſtantly, therefore we muſt judge of men by a tenure of life, what their conſtant wayes are: ſometimes though they be good men, they may ſtep awry into an ill way, and yet come in againe. Sometimes an ill man may croſſe a good way, as a theefe when hee croſſeth the high-way: or a good man ſteps out of the way, but this is not their way, they are both out and to ſeek of their way. A wicked man when hee ſpeakes of good things he is out of his way; he acts a part and aſſumes a perſon he is unskilfull to act, therfore he doth it untowardly. But a mans way is his courſe, a good mans way is good though his ſtartings be ill, and an ill mans way is naught, though for paſſion or for bie ends, hee may now and then doe good things. Therefore conſidering that the walking in the wayes of God is uniforme and orderly: let us judge of our ſelves by the tenure of our life, and courſe thereof. And let thoſe poore ſoules who thinke they are out of the way becauſe they run into ſome infirmities now and then, comfort themſelves in this, that God judgeth not by ſingle actions, but according to the tenure of a mans life, what hee is. For often-times Gods

children gaine by their ſlips, which makes them looke the more warily to their wayes for ever after that. He that walkes in the way to Heaven, if he be a good man, hee lookes to make ſurer footing in the wayes of God after his ſlips and falls. He labours alſo to make ſo much the more haſte home being a gainer by all his ſlips and fals. Let none therefore be diſcouraged, but let them labour that their wayes and courſes may be good, and not onely ſo, but to be uniforme, orderly and conſtant, and then they may ſpeake peace to their owne ſoules, being ſuch as are here deſcribed, *The juſt ſhall walk in them.*

Againe, he that will walke aright in Gods wayes, hee muſt be reſolute againſt all oppoſition whatſoever: for wee meete with many lets hinderances and ſcandals, to drive us out of the way. Sometimes the ill lives of thoſe who walke in theſe wayes, ſometimes their ſlips and fals, ſometimes perſecution, and our owne natures are full of ſcandals, ſubject to take this and that offence, and then we are ready to bee ſnared on the right hand, or feared and ſcared on the left. And our nature ſo farre as it is unſanctified, is prone to catch, and ready to joyne with the world: therefore wee have need of reſolution of ſpirit and determination: as *David*, *I have determined O Lord: and I will keepe thy lawes, I have ſworne that I will keepe thy righteous judgements*: this is a reſolute determination.

Pſal. 119. 106.

And

And then againe, pray to God with *David* that he would direct our wayes. *Oh that my wayes were ſo directed to keepe thy lawes!* I ſee that my nature is ready to draw me away to evill, and perverſe crooked courſes: I ſee though I determine to take a good courſe that there is much oppoſition: therfore good Lord direct mee in my courſe, direct thou my thoughts, words and carriage. Therefore that we may walke ſtedfaſtly, let us reſolve with ſetled determination, praying to God for ſtrength: otherwiſe reſolution with dependance on our owne power may be a worke of the fleſh: but reſolve thus, theſe are right wayes and ſtreight, they leade to Heaven, Happineſſe and Glory, therefore I will walke in them, vvhatſoever come of it. We have all the diſcouragements vvhich may hinder us in the vvayes of God. For as vve are travellers, ſo vvee are ſouldiers, vvarfaring men that meete vvith many rubbs, thornes, therefore to vvalke amidſt ſuch dangerous vvayes vve muſt be vvell ſhod vvith the preparation of the Goſpell of peace, that is Patience, and reaſons taken from thence. God hath provided ſpirituall armour in the Word againſt all oppoſitions that meet vvith us: ſo that by Reſolution and Prayer to him, uſing his meanes vve may goe through all.

Novv for a further helpe for us to vvalke conſtantly and reſolutely in the vvayes of God.

Take firſt the helpe of good company, if vve 1.

ſee any man to walke in a good way, let him not walke alone, but let us joyne our ſelves with thoſe that walke in Gods wayes, for why doth God leave us not onely his Word to direct us which way to goe, but likewiſe examples in all times, but that we ſhould follow thoſe examples? which are like the *Pillar of fire* which went before *Iſrael* unto *Canaan*. Wee have a Cloude and a Pillar of examples before us (unto which he alludes. *Hebr.* 12 1.) to leade us unto Heaven, not onely the Word, but examples in all times. *Walke as you have us for an example* (ſaith *Paul*) therefore it is a character of a gratious diſpoſition to joyne with the juſt, and thoſe who walke in the wayes of God. We ſee there is in all the creatures an inſtinct to keepe company with their owne kinde: as we ſee in Doves, Sheepe, Geeſe and the like. So it comes from a ſupernaturall gratious inſtinct of grace, for the good to walke and company with the good, helping them on in the way to Heaven. It is therefore a point of ſpeciall wiſedome to ſingle out thoſe for our company who are able to help us thither: as it is for travellers to chooſe their company to travell with.

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2. Againe, if we would walke aright in the wayes of God, let us have our end in our eye, like unto the traveller: looke on Heaven, the day of judgement, thoſe times either of eternall happineſſe or miſery which vve muſt all come too. The having of theſe in our eye will ſterne the

the whole courſe of our life, for the end infuſeth vigor in our carriages, and puts a great deale of life in the uſe of the meanes breeding a love of them, though they be harſh. Therefore we muſt pray and labour for Patience to conflict with our owne corrruptions and thoſe of the times we live in. This is unpleaſant to doe, but when a man hath his aime and end in his eye this inſpires ſuch vigor and ſtrength in a man that it makes him uſe meanes and courſes contrary to his owne naturall diſpoſition, offering a holy violence unto himſelfe: as thus it is not abſolutely neceſſary, that I ſhould have this or that, or have them all, or in ſuch and ſuch a meaſure, but it is abſolutely neceſſary, that I ſhould be ſaved and not damned: therefore this courſe I will take, in theſe wayes I will and muſt walke, which leade to Salvation. Let us therefore with *Moſes* have in our eye, *the Recompence of the reward*, and with our bleſſed Saviour the head of the faithfull, have before our eyes *the joy that was ſet before him*, which will make us paſſe by all thoſe heavie things that he paſſed through. Let us with the holy men of ancient time have *the price of that high calling* in our eye, to make us notwithſtanding all oppoſition preſſe forwards towards the marke. Hebr. 11. 26.

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indefinitly, becauſe we ſhould leave our none. For as we ſay in things that are to be beleeved, Faith chooſeth not this object, and not another, ſo Obedience chooſeth not this object, I will obey God in this and not in this, but it goes on in all Gods wayes. Therefore if we would walke on aright in Gods wayes, there muſt be conſideration of all the relations as we ſtand to

1. God. Firſt what duties we ow to God in heavenly things, to pleaſe him above all, whomſoever we diſpleaſe and to ſeeke the Kingdome of Heaven and his Righteouſneſſe before all, that all things may follow which are needfull for us.

Mat. 6. 33.

2. So in the next place, when we looke to our ſelves, to know thoſe wayes which are required of us in regard of our ſelves: for every Chriſtian is a Temple wherin God dwells, therefore we are to carry our ſelves holily, to be much in Prayer, and Communion with God in ſecret; A man is beſt diſtinguiſhed to be a good walker by thoſe ſecret wayes betwixt God and his ſoule; thoſe walks of Meditation and Prayer, wherein there is much ſweet intercourſe betwixt God and the ſoule. Therefore in this caſe a man makes conſcience of his Communion with God in his thoughts, deſires, affections, uſing all good meanes appointed of God to maintaine this Communion.

3. Then we ſhould look to our own carriage in the uſe of the creatures: to carry our ſelves in all things indifferently, becauſe *Wiſedome* and

Prudence

Prudence is ſeene in thoſe things eſpecially, to uſe things indifferent, indifferently, not to be much in the uſe of the world, in joy or ſorrow: but in moderation to uſe theſe things, being ſure to ſet our affections upon the maine.

And ſo in things indifferent, not to doe them with offence and exceſſe, but to ſee and obſerve the rule in all things of indifferency. 4.

And for our carriage to others in thoſe wayes, let us conſider, what we owe to thoſe above us, what reſpect is due to Governours, and what to others, what to thoſe who are without, what to thoſe who are weake, vve owe an example of holy life unto them, that vve give no occaſion of ſcandall: and alſo to walke wiſely towards them that are without, that we give no occaſion for the wayes of God to be ill ſpoken off. 5.

And for all conditions which God ſhall caſt us into, remember that thoſe be wayes which we ſhould walke ſeemely in. If Proſperity, let us take heed of the ſinns of proſperity, Pride, Inſolency, Security, Hardneſſe of heart and the like. If Adverſity, then let us practiſe the graces thereof, take heed of murmuring and repining Dejection of ſpirit, Diſpaire and the like. This is to walke like a wiſe man in all conditions, in thoſe relations he ſtands in. 6.

For our words likewiſe and expreſſions to others in that kind of our walking, that they may be ſavourie and to purpoſe, that wee labour to ſpeake by rule, ſeeing we muſt give an account 7.

of every idle word at the day of judgement. So that in all our labours, carriage and ſpeech we muſt labour to doe all wiſely and juſtly. Theſe are the wayes of God, and *The juſt walke in them.*

Mat. 12. 36.

Negatively what we muſt avoide in all our walking.

We muſt not do any thing againſt Religion Conſcience or Juſtice.

Remember in generall, we muſt never doe any thing againſt Religion, againſt Conſcience, againſt a mans particular Place and Calling, or againſt Juſtice. Let us not touch upon the breach of any good thing, eſpecially of Religion and Conſcience. Thus a man ſhall walke in the wayes of God, if with *Wiſedome* and *Prudence* he conſider what wayes are before him, to God, to himſelfe, to others: in all conditions and ſtates of life, to ſee what hee muſt, and what he muſt not doe, and then to walk in them anſwerably.

For our incouragement to walke in Gods wayes in our generall and particular callings.

I. *The wayes of God are the moſt ſafe waies.*

Know firſt they are the moſt ſafe waies of all, whatſoever trouble or affliction we meet with-all, it is no matter, it will proove the ſafeſt way in the end. For as it was with the cloude which went before Gods people, it was both for Direction and Protection: ſo the Spirit of God, and the wayes of God as they ſerve for Direction, ſo they ſerve for Protection, God will direct, and protect us if wee walke in his wayes: let him be our Director, and he will be our preſerver and protector in all times.

Againe,

Againe, they are the moſt pleaſant wayes of all, all Wiſedomes wayes are paved with Proſperity and Pleaſure, for when God doth enlarge and ſanctifie the ſoule to walke in them, he giveth withall a royall gift, inward peace of conſcience and joy unſpeakeable and glorious with an inlarged Spirit. God meets his children in his owne wayes, they are therfore to walke there. Let a man ſtart out of Gods vvayes, hee meets vvith the Divell, vvith the Divels inſtruments, and many ſnares. But in Gods vvayes, he ſhall be ſure to meete vvith God, if he vvalke in them vvith Humility and reſpect to God, looking up for direction and ſtrength, and denying his owne Wiſedome: in this caſe a man ſhall be ſure to have God goe along vvith him in all his vvayes. In Gods vvayes expect Gods company: therefore they are the ſafeſt and the moſt pleaſant vvayes.

2. *They are the moſt pleaſant wayes.*

And they are the cleaneſt and holieſt vvayes of all: having this excellent propertie in them, that as they leade to comfort, ſo they end in comfort, they all end in Heaven. Therefore let us not be vveary of Gods vvayes, of Chriſtianity and our particular Callings: vvherein vvhat vve doe let us do as Gods vvayes, having ſanctified them by Prayer, and doe it in Obedience to God. They are Gods vvayes vvhen they are ſanctified; God hath ſet me in this ſtanding, I expect his bleſſing therin, and vvhat bleſſing I find, I vvill give him the praiſe: God hath appointed that in ſerving man I ſerve him: therefore

3. *They are the moſt cleane & holy wayes.* Pſal 19. 9.

therefore vve muſt goe on in our particular vvayes, as the wayes of God, doing every thing as the worke of God, and we ſhall finde them the comfortableſt and pleaſanteſt wayes which end in joy, happineſſe and glory.

Vſe. 1. The uſe hereof may bee firſt Reprehenſion unto thoſe who can talke but not walke, that have tongues but not feete, to wit affections, that come by ſtarts into the narrow way: but yet be never well till they turne backe againe into the world, that broad way which leads unto deſtruction.

Vſe. 2. Secondly, it is for Inſtruction, to ſtirre us up to walke in Gods wayes: as *Pſalme.* 1. *Bleſſed is the man that walketh not in the counſell of the ungodly,* &c. *But his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in that Law doth he meditate day and night.*

Vſe. 3. Thirdly, this is for Conſolation, if this be our walke, then God will walk with us and the Angels of God ſhall have charge of us to keepe us in all our wayes: and though like *David* we ſlip out of the way, yet this not being our walke we come to the way againe. Though Gods children miſſe of their way, yet their reſolution, choice and indeavour, was to walke in the way, therefore ſuch are ſtill in a bleſſed eſtate, and keepe their communion with God. A man is not ſaid to alter his way, till he alter his choice and reſolution. The beſt man may have an ill paſſion and miſſe the way, but he will not turne from it willingly. And the worſt man may have

Pſal. 34. 7.

a good paſſion, and come into the way, but never continue in it, to make it his walke. From all which it appeareth, that they are onely righteous perſons, who continue to walke in the wayes of God. It is therefore Conſolation unto them who take that courſe, though all the world goe another way, yet they muſt imitate juſt men. And for us, we muſt imitate theſe juſt men, though they bee never ſo few in the world, and deſpiſed. If we would be counted the ſervants of God, we muſt imitate them that walke in thoſe pathes.

Now it is ſaid that the other ſort, *wicked men*, the wayes of God ſhall have a quite contrary courſe in them.

But the tranſgreſſors ſhall fall therin.

As one and the ſelfe-ſame *cloude* was both light to the *Iſraelites* and darkeneſſe unto the *Ægyptians*: So the ſame wayes of God proove both light and darkeneſſe, life and death to the godly and wicked: as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, unto *the one they are the ſavour of life unto life, and unto the other the ſavour of death unto death.* Therfore now here is the concluſion of all: if no warning will ſerve the turne of all what hath been given and ſaid: yet the word of God ſhall not returne emptie, it ſhall effect that for which it was ſent: one worke or other it will doe: even upon the moſt perverſe,

Exo. 14 20.

2 Cor. 2. 16.

Iſa. 55. 11.

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And then againe, pray to God with *David* that he would direct our wayes. *Oh that my wayes were ſo directed to keepe thy lawes!* I ſee that my nature is ready to draw me away to evill, and perverſe crooked courſes: I ſee though I determine to take a good courſe that there is much oppoſition: therfore good Lord direct mee in my courſe, direct thou my thoughts, words and carriage. Therefore that we may walke ſtedfaſtly, let us reſolve with ſetled determination, praying to God for ſtrength: otherwiſe reſolution with dependance on our owne power may be a worke of the fleſh: but reſolve thus, theſe are right wayes and ſtreight, they leade to Heaven, Happineſſe and Glory, therefore I will walke in them, vvhatſoever come of it. We have all the diſcouragements vvhich may hinder us in the vvayes of God. For as vve are travellers, ſo vvee are ſouldiers, vvarfaring men that meete vvith many rubbs, thornes, therefore to vvalke amidſt ſuch dangerous vvayes vve muſt be vvell ſhod vvith the preparation of the Goſpell of peace, that is Patience, and reaſons taken from thence. God hath provided ſpirituall armour in the Word againſt all oppoſitions that meet vvith us: ſo that by Reſolution and Prayer to him, uſing his meanes vve may goe through all.

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And ſo in things indifferent, not to doe them with offence and exceſſe, but to ſee and obſerve the rule in all things of indifferency. 4.

And for our carriage to others in thoſe wayes, let us conſider, what we owe to thoſe above us, what reſpect is due to Governours, and what to others, what to thoſe who are without, what to thoſe who are weake, vve owe an example of holy life unto them, that vve give no occaſion of ſcandall: and alſo to walke wiſely towards them that are without, that we give no occaſion for the wayes of God to be ill ſpoken off. 5.

And for all conditions which God ſhall caſt us into, remember that thoſe be wayes which we ſhould walke ſeemely in. If Proſperity, let us take heed of the ſinns of proſperity, Pride, Inſolency, Security, Hardneſſe of heart and the like. If Adverſity, then let us practiſe the graces thereof, take heed of murmuring and repining Dejection of ſpirit, Diſpaire and the like. This is to walke like a wiſe man in all conditions, in thoſe relations he ſtands in. 6.

For our words likewiſe and expreſſions to others in that kind of our walking, that they may be ſavourie and to purpoſe, that wee labour to ſpeake by rule, ſeeing we muſt give an account 7.

of every idle word at the day of judgement. So that in all our labours, carriage and ſpeech we muſt labour to doe all wiſely and juſtly. Theſe are the wayes of God, and *The juſt walke in them.*

Mat. 12. 36.

Negatively what we muſt avoide in all our walking.

We muſt not do any thing againſt Religion Conſcience or Juſtice.

Remember in generall, we muſt never doe any thing againſt Religion, againſt Conſcience, againſt a mans particular Place and Calling, or againſt Juſtice. Let us not touch upon the breach of any good thing, eſpecially of Religion and Conſcience. Thus a man ſhall walke in the wayes of God, if with *Wiſedome* and *Prudence* he conſider what wayes are before him, to God, to himſelfe, to others: in all conditions and ſtates of life, to ſee what hee muſt, and what he muſt not doe, and then to walk in them anſwerably.

For our incouragement to walke in Gods wayes in our generall and particular callings.

I. *The wayes of God are the moſt ſafe waies.*

Know firſt they are the moſt ſafe waies of all, whatſoever trouble or affliction we meet withall, it is no matter, it will proove the ſafeſt way in the end. For as it was with the cloude which went before Gods people, it was both for Direction and Protection: ſo the Spirit of God, and the wayes of God as they ſerve for Direction, ſo they ſerve for Protection, God will direct, and protect us if wee walke in his wayes: let him be our Director, and he will be our preſerver and protector in all times.

Againe,

Againe, they are the moſt pleaſant wayes of all, all Wiſedomes wayes are paved with Proſperity and Pleaſure, for when God doth enlarge and ſanctifie the ſoule to walke in them, he giveth withall a royall gift, inward peace of conſcience and joy unſpeakeable and glorious with an inlarged Spirit. God meets his children in his owne wayes, they are therfore to walke there. Let a man ſtart out of Gods vvayes, hee meets vvith the Divell, vvith the Divels inſtruments, and many ſnares. But in Gods vvayes, he ſhall be ſure to meete vvith God, if he vvalke in them vvith Humility and reſpect to God, looking up for direction and ſtrength, and denying his owne Wiſedome: in this caſe a man ſhall be ſure to have God goe along vvith him in all his vvayes. In Gods vvayes expect Gods company: therefore they are the ſafeſt and the moſt pleaſant vvayes.

2. *They are the moſt pleaſant wayes.*

And they are the cleaneſt and holieſt vvayes of all: having this excellent propertie in them, that as they leade to comfort, ſo they end in comfort, they all end in Heaven. Therefore let us not be vveary of Gods vvayes, of Chriſtianity and our particular Callings: vvherein vvhat vve doe let us do as Gods vvayes, having ſanctified them by Prayer, and doe it in Obedience to God. They are Gods vvayes vvhen they are ſanctified; God hath ſet me in this ſtanding, I expect his bleſſing therin, and vvhat bleſſing I find, I vvill give him the praiſe: God hath appointed that in ſerving man I ſerve him: therefore

3. *They are the moſt cleane & holy wayes.* Pſal 19. 9.

therefore vve muſt goe on in our particular vvayes, as the wayes of God, doing every thing as the worke of God, and we ſhall finde them the comfortableſt and pleaſanteſt wayes which end in joy, happineſſe and glory.

Vſe. 1. The uſe hereof may bee firſt Reprehenſion unto thoſe who can talke but not walke, that have tongues but not feete, to wit affections, that come by ſtarts into the narrow way: but yet be never well till they turne backe againe into the world, that broad way which leads unto deſtruction.

Vſe. 2. Secondly, it is for Inſtruction, to ſtirre us up to walke in Gods wayes: as *Pſalme.* 1. *Bleſſed is the man that walketh not in the counſell of the ungodly*, &c. *But his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in that Law doth he meditate day and night.*

Vſe. 3. Thirdly, this is for Conſolation, if this be our walke, then God will walk with us and the Angels of God ſhall have charge of us to keepe us in all our wayes: and though like *David* we ſlip out of the way, yet this not being our walke we come to the way againe. Though Gods children miſſe of their way, yet their reſolution, choice and indeavour, was to walke in the way, therefore ſuch are ſtill in a bleſſed eſtate, and keepe their communion with God. A man is not ſaid to alter his way, till he alter his choice and reſolution. The beſt man may have an ill paſſion and miſſe the way, but he will not turne from it willingly. And the worſt man may have

Pſal. 34. 7.

a good paſſion, and come into the way, but never continue in it, to make it his walke. From all which it appeareth, that they are onely righteous perſons, who continue to walke in the wayes of God. It is therefore Conſolation unto them who take that courſe, though all the world goe another way, yet they muſt imitate juſt men. And for us, we muſt imitate theſe juſt men, though they bee never ſo few in the world, and deſpiſed. If we would be counted the ſervants of God, we muſt imitate them that walke in thoſe pathes.

Now it is ſaid that the other ſort, *wicked men*, the wayes of God ſhall have a quite contrary courſe in them.

But the tranſgreſſors ſhall fall therin.

As one and the ſelfe-ſame *cloude* was both light to the *Iſraelites* and darkeneſſe unto the *Ægyptians*: So the ſame wayes of God proove both light and darkeneſſe, life and death to the godly and wicked: as the Apoſtle ſpeakes, unto *the one they are the ſavour of life unto life, and unto the other the ſavour of death unto death.* Therfore now here is the concluſion of all: if no warning will ſerve the turne of all what hath been given and ſaid: yet the word of God ſhall not returne emptie, it ſhall effect that for which it was ſent: one worke or other it will doe: even upon the moſt perverſe,

Exo. 14 20.

2 Cor. 2. 16.

Iſa. 55. 11.

The tranſgreſſors ſhall fall therin.

Whence vve ſee and may obſerve, *That the ſame word which is a word of life and ſalvation to the*

Obſerv.

the godly is an occaſion of ſinne and perdition unto the wicked. The ſame Sunn vvhich makes flowers and herbs to ſmel ſweet, makes carrions to ſmel vvorſe. The ſame vvord vvhich made the Apoſtles beleeve and confeſſe Chriſt, did alſo make many others of his Diſciples goe backe from him, ſaying: *This is a hard ſaying who can beare it?* So *Act.* 13. The ſame word vvhich made the unbeleeving *Iewes* blaſpheme, did make *as many as did belong unto eternall life Beleeve.* And vvhen Chriſt preached, many blaſphemed, and ſaid he had a Divell: others truſted and defended him. So ſaith *Paul*, the ſame word to ſome is *the ſavour of death unto death, and to ſome the ſavour of life unto life:* and ſo in another place he ſpeakes of the ſame vvord, *but we preach Chriſt crucified, unto the Iewes a ſtumbling blocke, and unto the Greekes fooliſhneſſe, but unto them which are called both Iewes and Greeks, Chriſt the power of God, and the wiſedome of God.* To this purpoſe *Peter* ſpeakes of *Chriſt, unto you therefore who believe he is pretious, but unto them which are diſobedient,* &c. *A ſtone of ſtumbling and a rocke of offence, even unto them which ſtumble at the word, beeing diſobedient, whereunto alſo they were appointed.* The Reaſons are.

Iohn. 6. 60.

Act. 13. 48.

2 Cor. 2. 16.

1 Cor. 1, 23, 24.

1 Pet. 2. 7, 8.

Reaſon. 1. Becauſe, *The naturall man perceiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are fooliſhneſſe unto him, neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned: but he that is ſpirituall judgeth all things,* &c.

1 Cor. 2. 14.

2. Secondly, *Becauſe they who doe evill hate the light*

light, and therefore cannot love what they hate. *This* (Chriſt ſaith) *is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkeneſſe better then light, becauſe their deeds were evill.* Iohn 3. 19.

Thirdly, Becauſe they are blinded, therefore they are led away by the god of this world Satan, ſo that they cannot perceive any thing that is ſpirituall, for God hath not given them a heart to perceive, *&c.* 3. 1 Cor. 4. 4. Deut. 29. 4.

Fourthly, becauſe they want Faith, which is called *The Faith of Gods elect*; and wee know *without Faith it is impoßible to pleaſe God:* for it is ſaid that *the word profited not thoſe unbeleeving Iewes, becauſe it was not mingled with Faith in thoſe who heard it.* 4. Tit. 1. 1. Heb 11 6. Hebr. 4. 2.

Fiftly, Becauſe the Word is like the Sunne, which cauſeth plants to ſmell ſweet, and a dunghill to ſmell ſtinking. So it works grace in ſome, and extracts the ſinne and foule vapours out of others. 5.

The *Vſe* is, Firſt Reproofe unto them who ſtumble at the wholeſome Doctrines of the Word, of Election, Reprobation, Predeſtination, and the like, ſuch indeed ſtumble at Chriſt himſelfe, he is a ſtumbling blocke unto them, as *Peter* ſpeaketh. They ſtumble at Chriſt who ſtumble at his Word. *Vſe.* 1. 1 Pet. 2 8.

Secondly, not to love the word the worſe becauſe evill men be made the worſe by it, which ſhewes rather the mighty power of the Word, which diſcovereth them, and will not let them be

be hid, unmasking Hypocrits to themſelves and others. As we muſt not like the Sun the worſe becauſe it makes carrion ſmell; nor the fanne, becauſe it winnoweth away the chaffe; ſo muſt we not fall out with the Word, becauſe it hath theſe effects upon wicked men.

Vſe.3. Laſtly, it is for Conſolation unto them that when their ſinne is reprooved, fall not out with the Word, but with their ſinne. When they are excited to duty they hate their corruption and doe indeavour to walke honeſtly without reproofe. This ſhewes the word is not the ſavour of death unto death to them, but the ſavour of life unto life: which Saint *Paul* makes a ſigne of Election, *When they receive the word of God, as the word of God with Thankſgiving.* 1 Theſ.2.13. This indeed is a matter of praiſe to give God thanks for his good word, which ſaves our ſoules, and comforts us heere in the way of all our Pilgrimage, till vvee arrive at heavenly glory.

For Concluſion of all, what then remaineth on our part to be done? ſurely to hearken no more to fleſh and blood, to the world or the Divell: but to heare what God ſaith in his moſt holy Word, and to frame our hearts with a ſtrong Reſolution to this *Returning* here exhorted to. Pſal 32.10. O if vve knevv the many miſeries and ſorrovves vvhich attendeth vvretched and miſerable ſinners, and ſinnefull courſes here and hereafter, it vvould be our firſt vvorke to follovv Gods counſell to his people, to *Returne*

from

from our ſinnefull wayes, to meete ſo gratious and mercifull a God: that he may (as his promiſe is) heale our *Backſlidings*; and be, *as the Dew unto us*, to make us fruitfull and aboundant in every good and perfect worke.

What can be ſaid more for our incouragement then that which hath beene delivered in this Chapter. God the party offended, who is JEHOVAH, God all-ſufficient, exhorts us to return unto him, who is able and willing to help. And hee allſo (out of his rich goodneſſe) forewarneth us of the dangerous eſtate a ſinner is in: who being *fallen by his iniquity*, ought therefore to pitie himſelfe, *Returne* and not runne on in a further courſe of diſobedience, and backeſliding. And words are put in our mouthes, dictated by God himſelfe, which needs muſt be very prevailing with him: what an incouragement is this? yea further, (as we have heard) theſe petitions are all anſwered gratiouſly, and aboundantly above all they did aske: wherin God ſurmounteth our deſires, and thoughts, as wee heard at large. Whereby we alſo may be confident to have our petitions and ſuites in like ſort granted, if we goe unto God with his owne words, and forme preſcribed. If we *take with us words* of Prayer we ſhall be ſure to vanquiſh all our ſpirituall enemies: for faithfull Prayer works wonders in Heaven and Earth. And that God doth not bid us be religious to our loſſe; he ſheweth that we ſhall looſe nothing by following his counſell, and walking in a religious

Iam. 5. 16.

ligious courſe of life: having abhominated our Idols, *Hee will obſerve us, and ſee us*, and bee a ſhelter unto us, having a derivation of fruitfulneſſe from his fulneſſe: *In mee is thy fruite found.*

Laſtly we have heard who can make right uſe of theſe things delivered? onely *the wiſe and prudent:* ſuch onely can underſtand heavenly things to purpoſe: *his ſecret is with them that feare him:* and *Wiſedome is* (only) *juſtified of her children.* When others have no heart given them to perceive Gods wayes aright (as *Moſes* ſpeaketh) *Tranſgreſſors* fall in Gods *right waies*, whilſt the juſt walks comfortably in them. O then let us hate ſin every day more and more, and be in love with Religion and the wayes of God: for that's the true good, which is the everlaſting good, that better *Maries part*, which ſhall never be taken away: *Whoſoever drinks of this living water ſhall never thirſt againe.* The beſt things of this world, have but the ſhadow, not the ſubſtance of goodneſſe. Let us then be wiſe for our ſelves, and pitie our ſelves in time *whilſt it is called to day*, becauſe (as our Saviour ſpeaks) *The night approacheth, wherin no man can work.* O then, let us often examine our hearts and covenant with them, let us ſee our ſinnes as they are, and Gods goodneſſe as it is; that our ſcarlet ſinns may be done away as a miſt from before him. O baniſh away our *Atheiſme*, which by our ſinnefull converſation proclaimeth us to be of the number of thoſe

Pſal. 25. 14.
Mat. 11. 19.
Luk. 10. 42.
John. 4. 14.
John. 9. 4.
Iſa. 1. 18.

those fooles, who have said in their heart, that there is no God. This serious consideration, alwayes makes first a *stop*, and then a *Returning*: to beleeve indeed that there is a God, who made the world, and a judgement to come. This God (by *Moses*) calleth true *Wisedome* indeed, *To remember our latter end*: O (saith he) *that they were wise that they would thinke of these things*: of which things? the miseries which attend sinne here and hereafter, and the blessings and comforts which follow a godly life both here and hereafter. *That they would remember their latter end*, the neglect whereof *Ieremy* sheweth was the cause: *that they came downe wonderfully and had no comforter: because they remembred not their latter end.*

Pſal. 14. 1.

Deut. 32. 29.

Lamen. 1. 9.

Therefore let us study this point well; that there is a God and a judgement to come, and this will compell us even out of selfe-love to returne from our sinnefull courses, and make a stop. By this meanes we shall not need a *Philips* boy to cry to us every day, we are mortall and must die, if our meditations once a day be both in *Heaven* and *Hell*. These strong considerations (aided with strong rationall reflectings on our selves) will keep us within compasse, overaw us and make us quake and tremble to goe on in sinne, which is worse then the Divell in this, that thereby he became a Divell. This will drive us to fly unto God, that he may *heale our Backeslidings*, who is described *with healing under his wings*, who in the dayes of his flesh healed

Mal. 4. 2.

all miserable and Returning Backesliders who ever came unto him. Therefore let us lay to heart these things, that so wee may bee kept in soule and body pure and unspotted, holy and without blame in his sight, untill the day of Redemption, when our mortality shall put on immortality, and our
1 Cor. 15. 54. corruptible incorruption, to reigne with God for ever and ever.

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FINIS.

THE SAINTS PRIVILEDGE OR,

A Christians constant Advocate:

Containing a short, but most sweet direction for every true Christian to walke comfortably through this valley of teares.

By the Faithfull and Reverend Divine, R. SIBS, D.D. and sometime Preacher to the Honourable Society of *Grayes-Inne.*

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THE

THE SAINTS Priviledge.

IOHN 16. 8,9,10.

When he is come, he ſhall reproove the world of ſinne, righteouſneſſe and judgement. Of ſin, becauſe they beleeve not in me; Of righteouſneſſe, becauſe I goe to my Father; Of judgement, becauſe the Prince of this world is judged.

Eſpecially the 10. verſe. *Of righteouſneſſe, becauſe I go to my Father and you ſhall ſee me no more.*

OVR bleſſed Saviour deſcending from Heaven to Earth for the Redemption of man: after he had accompliſhed that great worke, he aſcended thither againe. And knowing

knowing his Disciples would take his departure very heavily, hee labours to arme them against the assaults of all griefe and sorrow that might otherwise oppresse them, and that by many arguments. Among the rest, this is not the least, that when he is gone away, he will send the Comforter unto them. God never takes away any thing from his children but he sends them a better. And this Comforter whom he promised to send shall beare them through in all their Ministery, all function, and in effect hee thus bespeakes them. You my Disciples are to encounter with the world, Be of good comfort, my Spirit shall goe along with you, and *he shall reproove the world of sinne, righteousnesse, and judgement.* Of your selves you are too weake, but the Spirit shall strengthen you, and make way into the hearts of those that shall be saved, by convincing them of *sinne, righteousnesse, and judgement*; So that bee not discouraged, the Spirit shall breath courage into you and make way for your doctrine. *When the Comforter is come, he shall reproove the world of sinne, and of righteousnesse, and judgement: Of sinne, because they beleeve not in me, Of righteousnesse, because I goe to the Father; Of judgement, because the Prince of this world is judged.*

There are three maine parts of salvation.

Knowledge of our misery, knowledge of our deliverance, and a life answerable. The Holy Ghost shall worke all these, he shall Convince the world of their owne sinne, of righteousnesse by a Mediator, and of a reformation of life: So

that

that the Holy Ghoſt ſhall goe along with you in the carriage of the whole buſineſſe of mans ſalvation. Where he begins, he makes an end. Where he Convinces of ſinne, he Convinces of righteouſneſſe, and then of a neceſſity of a reformation, he beares all afore him, and he doth it in a ſpirituall order.

I. Convincing of ſin.

Firſt, he Convinces the world of ſinne, then of righteouſneſſe, then of judgement, becauſe it were in vaine to Convince of the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, unleſſe he hath before Convinced of ſin; For who cares for balme that is not wounded? Who cares for a pardon that is not condemned? therefore he Convinces of ſin firſt. I have ſpoken heretofore of Convincing of ſinne.

Here is a threefold Convincing, of ſinne, of righteouſneſſe, and of judgement, and every one of theſe hath a reaſon added thereto. *Of ſin, becauſe they beleeve not in me; Of righteouſneſſe, becauſe I goe to my Father; Of judgement, becauſe the Prince of this world is judged.*

What is this Convincing.

The Holy Ghoſt begins with Convincing of ſin; What is this Convincing? It is a cleare and infallible demonſtration of our condition, It brings a commanding light into the ſoule, It ſets downe the ſoule and takes away all cavills, all turnings and windings. To convince is to make a man as the Pſalmiſts phraſe is, lay his hand upon his mouth. Light is a convincing thing, now we ſee the Sun, we ſee it is day, though ten thouſand men ſhould ſay it is not day, we would not beleeve them, becauſe the convincing herof is

is undeniable, that he must be an unreasonable man that gainesayes it.

So then, the Spirit of God brings a commanding light into the soule undeniable; thou art thus and thus, here no shifting, no winding and turning will serve the turne, when the Holy Ghost comes with this light. I doe but plainely unfold this.

This Conviction of the Holy Ghost is not in generall onely, that all men are sinners, but particular and strong, thou art a sinner, and thou art in danger of damnation; And it is universall, taking in sins of nature, sins of life, sins of the understanding, will, and affections, and it is not of sinne onely, but of the misery by sinne, of the danger, folly, and madnesse of sinne, and of the aggravations that greaten sinne: as of stifling so many good motions, withstanding so many meanes, abusing so many mercies. The Holy Ghost Convinces us throughly, that wee can have nothing to reply. Because I have spoken of this before, I am short. Beloved, unlesse the Holy Ghost Convince, there will be no Convincing, our deceitfull hearts have so many windings and turnings; proud nature armes it selfe with defences, as a hedge-hogg winds himselfe round and defends himself by his pricks. So you have many cloath themselves with strong words, ill translations upon others, frivolous mitigations, the way of the multitude, as with a coate of male to keep out this Conviction, that did not the Holy Ghost strike in hard with their consciences, Thou art

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the man; this worke would never bee done.

But you will aske me this Question, how shall we know common Conviction of conscience from this of the Spirit? for carnall men that goe to Hell are Convinced by a common Conviction, what is this saving Conviction? *Quest.*

I answer, Common Conviction by the light of Nature is a weake Conviction, a little sparke will shew a little light, but it will not inlighten a roome, it must be the worke of some greater light, as the Sun; the Spirit is a strong light, stronger then naturall conscience. Naturall conscience and common light is of some breaches of the second Table. Naturall conscience never convinces of corrupt nature, but the Spirit doth most of all, as you may see in *David*, *Psal.* 51. He resolves all into this, as if he should say, what should I tell you of my murther and Adultery, in sin did my mother conceive me, so a true Christian doth not look to the branches so much as to the root. *Answ.* 1. *Difference.* Psal. 51.

Then againe, a naturall conscience when it convinceth a man, it is against his will, it makes him not the better man, he mends not upon it, but he is tortured and tormented; But a man that is convinced by the Holy Ghost, he takes Gods part against himselfe, he is willing to be laid open that he may find the greater mercy; So that there is a grand difference betweene common conviction of nature, and the Conviction of the Spirit. The Conviction of the Spirit is the light of the Spirit, which is of a higher nature then that of naturall conscience, I will send the Comforter, when 2. *Difference.*

when he comes he will greatly inlighten and over-power the soule.

3. Difference. Againe, the Conviction of the Spirit sticks by a man, it never leaves the soule: But that of an ordinary conscience it is but for a flash, and after they are worse then they were before. I must cut off these things, because the time is alwaies past upon these occasions before we begin.

Vse. Come we therefore to make some Use. The Spirit doth Convince of sinne. But how? by the Ministery ordinarily, though not alone by the Ministery. Therefore we must labour willingly to submit to the Ministery Convincing of sinne. Conscience will Convince first or last. Is it not better to have a saving Conviction now to purpose, then to have a bare desperate Conviction in Hell. O beloved all the admonitions wee heare, if we regard them not now, we shall hereafter, therefore labour to make good use of this Sword of the Spirit of God, and it is an argument of a good heart to wish, O that the Ministery might meet with my corruption, that it may be discovered to me to the full. A true heart thinkes sin the greatest enemy, and of all other miseries it desires to bee freed from the thraldome thereof; For that defiles Heaven and Earth and separates God from his creature. Its that that threw Angels out of Heaven, *Adam* out of Paradice. What imbitters blessings and puts a sting into all afflictions but sin? if it were not for sin we would take up any crosse, and beare any affliction more quietly then we doe.

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Therefore as we desire to be saved, and to stand with comfort before God at the day of judgement, let us desire and indeavour to bee throughly Convinced of sinne. Take heed of resisting the Spirit of God in the Ministery: why are so many led captive of their lusts, but because they hate the Ministery of the Word, they looke upon it as *Ahab* did upon *Elias*, Hast thou found me, O my Enemy. They naturally are in love with their sinnes, and there is none so much hated as those that present themselves to themselves. A man take him in his pure naturalls is a foolish creature, his heart rises against Conviction. You see the Pharisees, Wise men, Learned men, being convinced they hated Christ to the death; why? becouse he did untombe them and discover the dead mens bones within. Mat. 23. 27. So many now a daies that are convinced, hate any that by life or speech discover their sinne unto them, if it were possible and in their power to the death. Thus the Holy Ghost convinces of sin. But before I leave this point, let me adde this from the reason or ground of this Conviction [*becauſe they beleeve not in me*] That unbeleefe makes all other sinnes damnable, no sinne is damnable if we could beleeve and repent. Therefore we are convinced of sin, becouse we doe not beleeve: as we say of a man that is condemned, becouse he cannot reade, therefore he is condemned, he should escape if he could reade being for no great fault; so it is here, it is not beleeving in Christ and repenting makes

makes all other sins deadly.

The differing of one man from another is their faith and repentance, some there be whose sinnes are greater then others, yet by the Spirit of God and Faith, they worke them out every day. It is faith in the brazen Serpent that takes away the sting of the fiery Serpents.

I have done with the conviction of sinne. Let us now come to speake of the conviction of Righteousnesse.

2. Conviction of Righteousnes.

Of righteousnesse, because I goe to my Father and you shall see me no more; It is a fit time for the Holy Ghost to convince Gods people of righteousnesse when they are convinced of sinne before, then they can relish Christ: Balme is balme indeed when the wound is discovered and felt, O then a pardon is welcome when the party is condemned. The reason of this conviction of righteousnesse is, *because I goe to my Father and you shall see me no more.* The Holy Ghost as he sets on sinne upon the conscience, so he takes off sinne by applying to the conscience the righteousnesse of Christ, this is his office, first, to convince the world of sinne, and then to convince of righteousnesse, wherby we stand righteous before God.

And this righteousnesse here is not our owne inherent, but the righteousnesse of Christ a Mediator, God and man.

A fourefold gradation of conviction of righteousnesse

The Holy Ghost convinces of righteousnesse in this order of a fourefold gradation.

First that there must be a righteousnesse, and a full righteousnesse. The

The second is this, that there is no such righteousnesse in the creature.

Thirdly, that this is to be had in Christ the Mediator.

Fourthly, that this righteousnesse is our righteousnesse.

First there must be a righteousnesse, for wee have to deale with a God who is righteousnesse it selfe; and no uncleane thing shall come into Heaven, unlesse we have a righteousnesse, how shall we looke God in the face, or how can we escape hell. 1. *Gradation.*

Now for the second, that it is not in any creature, men or Angels; we have not a righteousnesse of our owne; for there are divers things to be satisfied, God himselfe, and the Law, and our owne consciences, and the world. Perhaps we may have a righteousnesse to satisfie the world, because we live civilly; O but that will not satisfie conscience; And then there must be a satisfaction to the Law, which is a large thing that condemnes our thoughts, desires, but God is the most perfect of all. Put case we have a righteousnesse of a good carriage among men, this will not satisfie God, and the Law, it will not satisfie conscience; men they are our fellow-prisoners, conscience will not be contented but with that which will content God, when conscience sees there is such a righteousnesse found out by the wisedome of God that contents him, else conscience will be alwaies in doubts and feares. 2. *Gradation.*

3. Gradation. Thirdly, this righteousnesse is to be had in Christ. What is the righteousnesse of Christ? The righteousnesse of Christ is that righteousnesse that is founded upon his obedience, active fullfilling the Law, and passive discharging all our debts, satisfying Gods Justice; the meritoriousnesse of both of them is founded upon the purity of his Nature, all his sufferings and doings had their excellency from the personall Union of God and Man, in reference to which Union wee may without blasphemy averre that God performed the Law, God died for us.

4. Gradation. Fourthly and lastly, this righteousnesse is our righteousnesse, the Spirit convinces that this belongs to all beleevers, for it is better then *Adam* had, his righteousnesse was the righteousnesse of a man; This righteousnesse is the righteousnesse of a mediator; And it is such a righteousnesse, that when wee are cloathed with it, we may goe through the Justice of God, wee may have accesse with boldnesse to the throne of grace, and say, Lord I come in the righteousnesse of Christ that hath appeased thy wrath and satisfied thy justice: this the Holy Ghost convinces of.

Quest. But you will aske me, how doth the Holy Ghost convince me of the righteousnesse of Christ?

Answ. I answer, First the Holy Ghost presents to the soule the knowledge of this excellent righteousnesse, and then creates a hand of faith to imbrace it being proposed; you that are humble and broken-

broken hearted ſinners, here is Chriſt for you. The Spirit of God doth not onely reveale the excellency of Chriſt, but that this belongs to me, that Chriſt is given for me, and that revelation of the Spirit doth ſway the ſoule, when the Spirit doth not tell in generall onely, that Chriſt is an excellent Saviour, but ſhall relate to a Chriſtian ſoule God gave Chriſt for thee: this ſwayes the heart to reſt upon Chriſt, whereupon the marriage is made up betweene the ſoule and Chriſt, the ſoule ſaies I am Chriſts, and I give my ſelfe to Chriſt, and to whatſoever accompanies Chriſt: and then as it is in marriage, the perſons by vertue of that relation have intereſt into each others ſubſtance and eſtate. So when this myſticall marriage is made up betweene Chriſt and us, wee have a right unto Chriſt by all rights, by titles of purchaſe and redemption; He hath purchaſed Heaven for us, and us for Heaven; all that Chriſt hath is ours, all his good is ours, our ſinnes his, and his righteouſneſſe ours; So when the Holy Ghoſt convinces me of Chriſts righteouſneſſe, and gives me faith to imbrace it, then Chriſt is mine with all he hath. By this I have ſpoken you may ſee how the Spirit convinces, doe but imagine what a bleſſed condition the ſoule is in when this match is made.

But you will aske me why is the ſending of the Spirit neceſſary for the convincing of this righteouſneſſe?

I anſwer for divers reaſons.

Reason.1. First, becauſe it is above the conceit of man, that there ſhould be ſuch a righteouſneſſe of God-man; therefore it is diſcovered by the Spirit, and when it is diſcovered, the Spirit muſt open the eyes of the ſoule to ſee, els wee ſhall have a naturall knowledge of ſupernaturall things; for a man by a naturall knowledge may underſtand them, ſo as to be able to diſcourſe of them, therefore to change the ſoule, there muſt be a ſupernaturall ſight to ſee ſupernaturall things. A divell incarnate may know all things and yet want to ſee, onely the Holy Ghoſt gives inward ſight, inward eyes, and works faith to ſee Chriſt as mine.

Reaſon.2. Againe, the ſending of the Holy Ghoſt is neceſſary for this conviction, becauſe hee alone muſt ſet downe the ſoule and make the conſcience quiet, who is greater then the conſcience. Conſcience will clamour thou art a ſinner, the Holy Ghoſt convinces, in Chriſt thou art righteous. The Holy Ghoſt onely knowes what is in the heart of God the Father, and in the heart of every man: He onely knowes the intent of the Father to every Chriſtian, and can anſwer all inward Objections and Cavils of fleſh and blood raiſed up againſt the ſoule; therefore the convincing of the Holy Ghoſt is neceſſary. Howſoever Chriſt hath purchaſed our peace, yet the Holy Ghoſt muſt apply it: For the conſcience is ſo full of clamours, that unleſſe the Holy Ghoſt apply what Chriſt hath done, conſcience will not be ſatisfied: God

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the Father hath appointed Christ, and Christ hath wrought it, but the third person must apply it to the soule, to assure us, that this belongs to us. The application of all good things to the soule that Christ the Sonne hath wrought, is the proper office of the third person. In civill Contracts here there must not onely be a purchase but a Seale, though Christ hath wrought righteousnesse for us, the Spirit must Seale it to every soule, this righteousnesse belongs to you, Christ is yours with all that is his.

Againe it must needs be a worke of the Spirit, because flesh and blood is full of pride and would faine have some righteousnesse of their owne, the Jewes were of this temper, and it hath beene the greatest question from the beginning of the world till this day, what is that righteousnesse whereby we must stand before God, but Gods Spirit answers all objections. Beloved, the best of us though in an estate of grace, if the Holy Ghost doe not convince us, we shall be in darkenesse and call all into question, therfore we must not bee convinced onely at the first, but in a continued course of Christianity: unlesse the Holy Ghost doth this, we shall fall into a dungeon of darkenesse, therefore the convincing of the Holy Ghost is necessary. *Reason. 3.*

Beloved this should make us take heed how we heare, and how we reade, even to beg this convincing of the Spirit in every Ordinance. O Lord vouchsafe the Spirit of revelation, and take the scales off mine eyes, that as these are

truths of themselves, so they may be truths to me. Sway my soule that I may cast my selfe upon thy mercy in Christ, &c.

Object. I must answer some Cases that many a poore soule is troubled withall. Alas I am not convinced by the Spirit that Christ is my righteousnesse, therefore what case am I in?

Answ. I answer, some are more strongly convinced, and some lesse. Let a man be careless of holy duties, and he is lesse convinced, but let him be constant therein and he shall finde the Holy Ghost convincing him more strongly, that the righteousnesse of Christ is his; there are many presumptuous persons that turne the grace of God into wantonnesse, who because through the Enthusiasmes of Satan they never question their estate, but conceit themselves to be good men and in the estate of grace, think this to be the convincing of the Holy Ghost: whereas this is a generall rule, Spirituall convincing is not totall but alwaies leaves in the heart some drugs of doubting, as a ship that rides at anchor, though it may reele too and fro, yet is it safe for the maine. So it is with the soule that is truely convinced, it is safe for the maine, yet it is tumbled and tossed with many doubts and feares, but their Anchor is in Heaven.

Take this for a ground of comfort subscribed unto in the experience of all beleevers, that the Spirit of God so farre convinces them of Christs righteousnesse, as preserves in them such

ſuch a power of grace as to caſt themſelves upon the mercy of God in Chriſt; and God will not quench that ſparke, though there be little or no light, yet there will be heate; God will ſend his Spirit into the heart, ſo farre as it ſhall not betray it ſelfe to deſpaire, and let ſuch a beame into the ſoule, as all the power in hell ſhall not be able to keepe out; but it is our owne neglect that we are not more ſtrongly convinced, ſo as to breake through all. This is the priviledge of a conſtant carefull Chriſtian, to bee ſtrongly convinced of the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt.

Thus we ſee how the Holy Ghoſt convinceth us of righteouſneſſe, other things I muſt omit. If this be ſo, I beſeech you let us not looſe our priviledges and prerogatives, doth God give grace, and give Chriſt with all his righteouſneſſe, and ſhall not we improove them? Let us uſe this righteouſneſſe in all temptations. Let us pleade it to God himſelfe, when hee ſeemes to be our enemy. Lord thou haſt ordained a righteouſneſſe, the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, that hath given full ſatisfaction to thy juſtice, and he hath given me a title to Heaven: howſoever my ſoule be in darkeneſſe, yet Lord I come unto thee in the name of my Saviour, that thou wouldeſt perſwade my ſoule of that righteouſneſſe. I would glorifie thy Name. Wherein wilt thou be glorified? In mercy or juſtice? O in mercy above all. I cannot glorifie thee in thy mercy, unleſſe thou perſwade me *Vſe.*

of the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt. Can I love thee except thou love mee firſt? Canſt thou have any free and voluntary obedience from me, unleſſe I be convinced that Chriſt is mine? Now Lord I beſeech thee, let me be ſuch as thou maiſt take delight in. Beloved, ſince we have meanes of ſuch a gift, let us never reſt till wee have it. If Satan ſet upon us, hold this out, if he tell thee thou art a ſinner, tell him I have a greater righteouſneſſe then my owne, even the righteouſneſſe of God-Man, I have a righteouſneſſe above all my unrighteouſneſſe. Satan ſaith God is diſpleaſed with me, I but he is more pleaſed with me in Chriſt then diſpleaſed with me in my ſelfe. Satan ſaith I have ſinned againſt God, I but not againſt the remedy, ſend Satan to Chriſt. O but thou haſt a corrupt nature that makes thee runne into this ſinne and that ſinne; but there is a ſpring of mercy in God, and an over-running fountaine of righteouſneſſe in Chriſt, an over-flowing ſea of the blood of Chriſt. Therefore let us labour to improove this righteouſneſſe of Chriſt to God and Satan, and againſt al temptations, yea againſt our own conſciences; I am thus & thus; yet God is thus and thus, all his Attributes are conveyed to me in Chriſt. Let us exalt God and Chriſt, and ſet up Chriſt above our ſins, above any thing in the world, as S. *Paul*, who counted all things dung and droſſe for the excellent knowledge of Chriſt. *Queſt.* You will aske me, How ſhall wee know whether we be convinced of this righteouſneſſe

ouſneſſe or no? I anſwer, we may know by the Method Chriſt uſes in convincing; Firſt, he convinces of ſinne and then of righteouſneſſe; for a man to catch at righteouſneſſe before hee bee convinced of ſinne, it is but an uſurpation; for the Holy Ghoſt firſt convinces of ſinne. *Answ.*

Therfore you have many periſh becauſe they never were abaſed enough. Beloved, people are not loſt enough, and not miſerable enough for Chriſt, and not broken enough for him, and therfore they go without him. But how ſhall I know that the Holy Ghoſt hath convinced me enough of ſin, ſo that I may without preſumption apply the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt unto my ſelfe? *Queſt.*

Onely thus, if the Holy Ghoſt have diſcovered my ſinfull condition of nature and life, ſo as to worke in me an hatred of ſin, and to alter my bent another way, and ſo make Chriſt ſweet unto me, then I am ſufficiently convinced of ſinne. *Anſw.*

This in anſwer to that Queſtion by the way. To returne in the next place, I may know I am convinced throughly of the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt by the witneſſe and worke of the Spirit. The Spirit brings light, and faith, the work of the Spirit hath a light of its owne, as I know I beleeve, when I beleeve, but ſometimes wee have not the reflect act of faith whereby to evidence our owne graces to our ſelves, but ever he that is convinced of the Spirit of God, his heart will be wrought to beare marveilous love to God; upon this

this apprehenſion, that God is mine, and Chriſt is mine, the ſoule is conſtrained to love, whereupon enſues an enlargement of heart and a prevalency of comfort above all diſcomfort, for love caſteth out feare. This one comfort that our ſins are forgiven and that we have right and title to Heaven, when the ſoule is convinced of this it is in a bleſſed condition, then what is poverty and what is impriſonment? not worthy to bee reckoned in reſpect of the glory that ſhall be revealed.

Againe, where the Holy Ghoſt convinces enough, there is inward peace and great joy ſutable to the righteouſneſſe. As the righteouſneſſe is an excellent righteouſneſſe of God-Man, ſo that peace and joy that comes from it is unſpeakable peace and joy: So that when the heart ſees it ſelfe inſtated in peace and joy, as you have it, *Rom.5. Being juſtified by faith wee have peace towards God*, not only inward peace and joy, but a peace that will ſhew it ſelfe abroad, a glorious peace, a peace that will make us glory, verſe 3. *We glory in tribulation*. A hard matter to glory in abaſement: not only ſo, but we glory in God, God is ours, and Chriſts righteouſneſſe ours; when Chriſt hath ſatisfied Gods wrath, then we may make our boaſt of God.

Againe, where this conviction of righteouſnes is, it anſwers all objections, the doubting heart will object this and that, but the Spirit of God ſhewes an All-ſufficiency in Chriſts obedience, and that ſets the ſoule downe quietly in all croſ-

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ſes, and calmes it in all ſtormes in ſome degree. Where the ſoule is convinced of the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, there the conſcience demands boldly: *It is God that juſtifies, who ſhal condemne? It is Chriſt that is dead and riſen againe and ſits at the right hand of God; Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods choſen.* So that a convinced conſcience dares all creatures in Heaven and Earth, it works ſtrongly and boldly. I ſhall not need to inlarge this, you know whether you are convinced. To end the point, I beſeech you labour to live by this faith, heere is an evidence if we can live by it? How is that? Every day to make uſe of the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, as every day we run into ſinne. Be ſure we have our conſciences ſprinkled with the blood of Chriſt, that as we increaſe new guilt, ſo we may have a new pardon, therefore every day labour to ſee God as reconciled, and Chriſt as our Advocate with the Father. Chriſt is now in Heaven, if we ſinne, make uſe of him, this ſhould be the life of a Chriſtian, to make uſe of Chriſts righteouſneſſe; when you finde nature polluted, goe to God, and ſay, Lord my nature though foule in it ſelfe, yet is holy and pure in Chriſt, He tooke the weakneſſe of the humane nature unto him that hee might communicate the worth and efficacy of his divine nature unto me, and for my actions I am a ſinner, but Chriſt hath fully diſcharged all my debts, and is now in Heaven, he hath performed all righteouſneſſe for me. Looke not upon mee as in my ſelfe, but looke upon

Vſe.

upon me in Christ, He and I am one. This should bee every daies exercise to see our selves in Christ, and so see him and our selves one. I should inlarge the point further, but I will speake a word of the reason.

What is the reason why the Comforter may and shall convince of righteousnesse? *Because I go to the Father*; what strength is there in that reason? why this, Christ took upon him to be our surety, and he must acquit us of all our sins ere he can go to his Father? If one sinne had beene unsatisfied for he could not have gone to his Father, but now he is gone to his Father, therfore all our sins are satisfied for, so that now the Ascention of Christ is a sufficient pledge to me that my person is accepted, and my sins pardoned, because he is gone to his Father to appeare before the Father for us, which he could not have done, had he not fulfilled all righteousnesse.

But wherefore did he go to the Father? why, to make application of what he had wrought. If Christ should not have gone to the Father, he could not have sent the Holy Ghost to us. Therfore there is great use of this going to his Father. Satan pleads before God we are such and such, I but saith Christ I have shed my blood for them, and there he perfumes all our weake prayers; if we were not imperfect what need wee a Mediator in Heaven. Therefore he is gone to Heaven to disanull all Satans accusations, and to provide a place for us; die when wee will, our place is ready.

Then

Then againe he is gone to the Father to cloath us with a ſweet relation, to make the Father our Father. For he ſaith, *Iohn* 12.17. *I goe to my Father and to your Father*; So that he is not aſhamed to call us Brethren, by vertue of this wee may goe to God and call him Father, and when wee die wee may without preſumption ſay; Father into thy hands I commend my ſpirit, for the Father loves us as hee loved Chriſt, with one and the ſame love, though in a farre different degree. What a comfort is this, that when we die, we goe to our Father that is better then any earthly Father; Therfore it ſhould joy us when the time of our departure comes: We ſee old *Iacob* when he ſaw the Chariots come out of Ægypt, how his heart leaped becauſe he ſhould go to ſee his Sonne *Ioſeph*: So when death is ſent to tranſport us to Chriſt, to Heaven, had we a ſtrong faith we ſhould be exceeding glad.

And let us learne here the art of faith from Chriſt, *I go to the Father*, ſaith he, there was a great deale of time yet to paſſe, no leſſe then forty daies after his Reſurrection before hee went to the Father, yet he ſaith, I goe to the Father, to ſhew that faith preſents things future as preſent; Faith ſees Heaven as preſent, and the day of judgement as preſent, and doth affect the ſoule as if they were now exiſtent. If we had a Spirit of faith it would thus preſent things farre off as nigh at hand. Therfore when we meet with any thing that may make our way to Heaven ſeeme long or trou-

troubleſome, exerciſe your faith, and make your terme preſent to your ſpirit though remote from ſence, ſay I goe to the Father, what though I goe through blood and a ſhameſull death, yea perhaps a tormentfull death: yet I goe to the Father; when a man is once perſwaded that God is his Father in Chriſt, it will make him walke to Heaven before his time.

Vſe. Let us make Uſe of this point of Chriſts going to the Father. Beloved, there is not a point of Religion but hath a wonderfull ſpring of comfort, and it is want of faith that wee doe not draw more comfort from them. When therefore wee part with our friends by death, thinke they are gone to their Father. If yee loved me ſaith Chriſt, ye would rejoyce, becauſe I ſaid *I goe to the Father.* If we love our friends, we ſhould rejoyce when they die; Beloved, this ſhould comfort us, Chriſt is gone to his Father, O what welcome was there of Chriſt when he came into Heaven, the ſame welcome will there be when we goe to the Father? How joyfull intertainement ſhall we have of the Father and the Sonne? Therefore death ſhould not bee troubleſome to us, ſay Chriſts righteouſneſſe is mine, therefore I know I ſhall go to the Father, what care I then what kind of paines I goe through. If a man be going to a deſired place, howſoever the way be troubleſome, the ſweetneſſe of the end will make him forget the diſcouragements of his paſſage. Perhaps

we

wee must wade to Heaven through a Sea of blood, it matters not, the end will recompence all, though we lose our limbes by the way: It is better to limpe to Heaven, then dance to Hell.

FINIS.

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